Chips from Tunis

Madame Barbe Patteson

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CHIPS FROM TUNIS:

A Glimpse of Arab Life.

BY

MADAME BARBE PATTESON.

OSTENDO NON OSTENTO.

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THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS

Dedicated,

BY KIND PERMISSION,

TO THE

LADY CHRISTIAN MAULE.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I. PAGE

Short History of Tunis and its Sovereigns—Progress of Civilisation—Abolition of Slavery—Relations with England—Death of Mohammed-es-Sadok and Accession of Ali Bey, the Reigning Sovereign . 9

CHAPTER II.

Journey from Cannes to Tunis—Quarantine—First Impressions—Visit to an Arabian Family—Fast of the Ramadân 62

CHAPTER III.

Religious Sects and Observances—Pilgrimage to Mecca—Despotism of the Beys—Manner of Administering Justice—Anecdotes 86

CHAPTER IV.

Precious Stones—Mineral Springs—Origin of Baths—Visit to Carthage—Physicians—Polygamy—Perfumery—Native Races 133

CHAPTER V. PAGE

The Habits and Customs of the Israelites—Pilgrimage to Jerusalem—Negro Population—Ostrich Hunting . 162

CHAPTER VI.

Visit to Susa—Towns on the Coast—Arab Wedding—Visit to Kairwān—Return to Tunis—Conclusion . 185

PREFACE.

"CHIPS FROM TUNIS"! This is a title which seems to promise a series of pithy anecdotes concerning a place about which the public curiosity has of late been aroused. What, then, will be the disappointment of my readers at having to wade through dull historical statistics!

But have patience, and the "Chips" will follow in due season, concerning this most Oriental and interesting of all Moslem cities.

CHIPS FROM TUNIS.

CHAPTER I.

Short History of Tunis and its Sovereigns—Progress of Civilisation—Abolition of Slavery—Relations with England—Death of Mohammed-es-Sadok and Accession of Ali Bey, the Reigning Sovereign.

IT seems certain that the city of Tunis was founded by the Phœnicians prior to that of its neighbour Carthage, from which it is distant about ten miles. In the fifth century B.C. it had to submit, with the rest of the Phœnician towns in the north of Africa, to the hegemony of Carthage.

It was probably in the neighbourhood of Tunis that Regulus the Roman general was defeated and captured by the Carthaginian forces under Xantippus the Lacedæmonian. But it did not become a flourishing town until after the destruction of Carthage in 146 B.C. by Scipio Æmilianus, when the province of Africa was constituted.

In the year B.C. 29, Augustus carried out the

design, originally conceived by Julius Cæsar, of rebuilding Carthage, which speedily regained something of its ancient importance. It remained a flourishing town till about 430, when it fell into the hands of the Vandals.

While the Romans thus sought to establish their conquests in Africa, the vanquished tribes strove to throw off the foreign yoke; but, though headed by brave chieftains, they were finally forced to succumb to superior force, and about the year 25 A.D. the Roman power was firmly seated, and extended from the Nile to the ocean.

The Roman nobility now emigrated in numbers to Carthage and its environs, and built villas and spacious palaces, vestiges of which are still to be seen at Marsa, the residence of the present Bey of Tunis. A period of comparative tranquillity followed, though often troubled by internal dissensions, until, in 310 A.D., Maxentius assumed the imperial power in Rome, and visited his dominions in Africa. Here he rendered himself odious by his cruelty and oppression to the people of the country, who, after many bloody conflicts headed by Firmus, a brave Numidian general, finally threw off the power of Rome in 375.

The Vandals now made a raid upon the coast of Africa. This people had already distinguished themselves by their devastations in France and Spain. The province of Vandalusia (now Andalusia), in the latter kingdom, had been abandoned to them, and in 429 they crossed into Africa, under the command of Genseric, who made himself master of Byzacĭum, Gœtulia, and part of Numidia. He then laid siege to Hippo, the metropolis of the Numidian kings, and it was during this siege that St. Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo, died. He was a native of Tagastum, a town in Numidia.

Christianity had already penetrated into Africa, even before Constantine had, in 313, made it the state religion of Rome, and Cyprian, the Bishop of Carthage, had already fallen a martyr to his faith, after having suffered much from the Decian persecution. It was about this time that the Arian heresy spread widely, being propagated by the Vandals. But, in 533, Belisarius, the general of Justinian, appeared before Carthage and entirely conquered them. From this time they entirely disappear from Africa as a powerful people.

This country of Moors and Numidians had, as we

have seen, by turns been oppressed by the Greeks, Romans, and Vandals. It was now destined to be conquered and inhabited by the Arabs or Saracens. The natives had suffered so much that they hailed their arrival as defenders and not as enemies of their independence, for there were many characteristic points of resemblance between the two races. They were both warlike, enterprising, and adventurous, and they were probably of kindred origin.

The Arabs, headed by able chieftains, made many conquests, and occupied successively, Cyrenaica, Bizerta, and founded Kairwān, the Holy city of the Moslems of the west. As they advanced, they disseminated the religion of Mahomet along their course. Towards 670 Kairwān became the capital of a principality subjected to the caliphs of the East, under whose name these conquests had been made. It was called the Holy City, from the tomb of the friend and companion of Mahomet (some say he was his barber) having been placed here, where a splendid mosque was erected to his memory.

The Arabs, after having taken possession of Tunis, laid siege to Carthage, and utterly destroyed it (A. D. 693), the fugitive inhabitants

taking refuge in Sicily and Spain. The ruins of this town served to embellish Tunis, its ancient rival, where many of the houses were adorned with its beautiful marble columns and other remains.

The caliphs now appointed governors at Tunis, who, however, soon shook off their power, and made themselves independent, barely recognising the fact that the caliph at Bagdad was the sovereign of Islamism. The famous Caliph Haroun Al Raschid ascended the throne of Persia in 786, and determined to re-instate his power in Africa. He had already sought the alliance of Charlemagne by despatching ambassadors with rich presents. He accordingly sent Ibrahim-ben-Aghlab, a young man of great ability, to Tunis as governor, and thought to secure a clever and devoted subject, incapable of following the bad example of his predecessors. But in this hope he was deceived. Aghlab soon broke into open rebellion, seized upon Kairwān, and was the founder of the first of those powerful semi-religious dynasties, called the Aghlabites, followed in succession by the Fatimites, Almohades, Almoravides, etc., which were destined to wield such unlimited power over the followers of Islam.

Aghlâb was succeeded by his son Zyadet Allah, whose reign was distinguished by the conquest of Sicily. Tunis now by turns fell into the hands of victorious chieftains from Cordova and Morocco till 1120, when the Almohades, who were of Moorish origin, succeeded in repelling the Almoravides, after gaining a signal victory. The Almoravides, who originally came from Yemen, had under their chieftain Yousouf-ben-Taschfyn, greatly extended their conquests until the Almohades drove them out of the country. They then took refuge in the island of Majorca, which formed part of the caliphate of Cordova.

The country now enjoyed peace for a hundred years, and during this time the arts and sciences and commerce began to flourish. Treaties were concluded with Italy, and commercial relations established with various countries, the exports of Tunis consisting of corn, oil, coral, gold powder, carpets from Morocco, and precious stuffs.

The Christians were allowed to settle themselves in the country, to build places of worship, and to possess land, while Mohammedan missionaries were sent into the interior of the country to convert the negroes. They made them abolish human sacri-

fices, as well as other horrible customs. It was about this time, in 1236, that the Moors were driven out of Spain by Ferdinand of Castile, and lost a great part of their African possessions, the Almohades having been superseded at Tunis by the Beni Hafs, the last native dynasty. But the Moorish power, though much weakened, still existed in Spain till 1492, when their last king of Granada Boabdil, was entirely defeated by Gonsalvo de Cordova, the general of Ferdinand the Catholic. He was forced to fly, and with the illustrious tribe of the Abencerrages took refuge in Tunis, where to the present day their descendants are proud of their noble birth, and retain the remembrance of their ancestors' famous exploits. This is corroborated by the following touching circumstance. When the Abencerrages were expelled from Spain, each householder carried the key of his house with him, and religiously handed it down to his posterity, who treasured it as a sacred relic. It is even said that some are so sanguine as to cherish a hope of one day returning to their ancient possessions.

In 1270 the throne of Tunis was occupied by Mohammed Mostanser. Mohammed, whose surname Mostanser signifies "he who implores God's

help," had reigned eighteen years, when St. Louis of France appeared before Goletta at the head of a large army. This prince had already experienced great reverses in his first crusade, and, as is well known, had been made prisoner in Egypt after the battle of Mansourah, only obtaining freedom by the payment of a large ransom. But these reverses did not deter him from fitting out a second expedition on his return to France, and his brother Charles, King of Naples and Sicily, who had his own private cause for complaint against the king of Tunis, for the non-payment of his annual tribute to Sicily, easily persuaded St. Louis to invade Tunis, as being the gate of Egypt, and the best starting-point for gaining possession of the Holy Land.

These were the causes which led to the second crusade of St. Louis, which was destined to end still more fatally than the first. The king, who was accompanied by his three sons and the King of Navarre, effected the landing of his army without much difficulty. He made himself master of the fortress, or Kasba; but the infidels entrenched themselves so strongly in the town, that it was impossible to dislodge them, and they, in their

turn, harassed the invaders, avoiding what might lead to a decisive battle. The reinforcements which Charles had promised did not arrive; the zeal of the soldiers began to cool, owing to the fatigue and privation which they endured, added to the excessive heat; and at last the plague broke out, and decimated the army. St. Louis was himself attacked by it; and in the year 1270 the last crusading monarch died at Porto Farina, at the age of fifty-five.

The throne of Tunis was occupied by princes who reigned in quick succession, but the dynasty of the Beni-Hafs still maintained their power, though often attacked and experiencing many reverses. The history of Tunis at this period is but a dry, uninteresting series of warlike and political intrigues, accompanied by frequent crimes, which led to speedy and short-lived usurpations of the throne.

The kingdom of Tunis now comprised Bône, Bougie, and Tripoli, with other smaller towns. The Moors had distinguished themselves by their industry and intelligence; the commercial treaties were strictly observed; and gradually the fruits of civilisation began to show themselves.

In 1553, Moulay Hassem ascended the throne, and his first act was to cause his brother to be strangled. The younger one, Reschijd, escaped, and took refuge in Algiers, where he put himself under the protection of the sovereign, who was no other than the famous corsair, Khayr-ed-Dyn Barbarossa. He and his brother Aroudi had made themselves the terror of all navigators in the Mediterranean by their daring exploits and shameless depredations. Khayr-ed-Dyn had prevailed on the King of Tunis to give him the island of Djerba as his residence; but not satisfied with this concession, he had hailed with joy an appeal of the Algerians to come to their assistance against the Spaniards, who had made a descent on the town, and seized on Oran. After making himself master of the situation, he had paid homage to Selim, the Sultan of Constantinople, who had accepted his vassalage, and given him a garrison of janissaries, and finally conferred on him the dignity of Pacha, and Generalissimo of the Ottoman fleet.

Khayr-ed-Dyn received the fugitive prince Reschijd kindly, and took him to Constantinople, where it was agreed by the Sultan that his wrongs should be made the pretext of a descent upon Tunis ; and

accordingly a powerful fleet was sent under the command of Khayr-ed-Dyn, who on his arrival at Tunis called upon the inhabitants to open their gates and receive their rightful prince. The Tunisians, believing that Reschijd was on board one of the ships, and hating their present king, Moulay Hassem, hastened to accede to his demands, and compelled Moulay to fly. Then Khayr-ed-Dyn informed them that from henceforth they were the subjects of the Sultan; and, however indignant they were at his ruse, they were compelled by superior force to submit. The unfortunate Reschijd was thrown into prison at Algiers, and there ended his days.

Moulay Hassem then had recourse to Charles V., who had viewed with displeasure the dominion of the Porte in Tunis, and he, in conjunction with the Pope, the King of Portugal, and the Knights of Malta, prepared for an attack upon Tunis. Khayr-ed-Dyn, in his turn, called upon the Sultan to send forces to support him; but Selim being engaged in other wars, replied that he must defend himself as best he could, which, accordingly, he prepared to do. Charles V. took the command in person, left Barcelona at the head of immense forces,

arrived at Carthage, and landed at the same place where nearly three centuries before St. Louis had formed his camp. Goletta and Tunis fell into his hands after an obstinate resistance, and Barbarossa was compelled to take flight. The emperor then set free about 20,000 Christian slaves, composed of Genoese, Venetians, and Catalans, who had been captured at different times by Khayr-ed-Dyn, and who had been employed in making a canal at Goletta. Moulay Hassem was re-established on his throne, and agreed to recognise the dominion of Spain. The emperor then instituted the famous Cross of Burgundy in commemoration of his victories, and returned to Spain, leaving a garrison at Goletta, commanded by Bernard Mendoza.

Tunis, however, did not remain long under the Spanish yoke, for in 1573, after many bloody battles had been fought, Sinan Pacha seized on it in the name of the Sultan. The Spaniards made a brave resistance, but were finally overpowered by numbers, the Turks massacring all who had taken refuge in the fort at Goletta, with the exception of the governor and Mohammed-el-Hassy, the last scion of the family of Beni-Hafs.

The dominion of the Turks now opened a new era for Tunis. A pacha was appointed, who governed in concert with the Dey, or chief of the janissaries, though the pre-eminence of the Porte was at first fully recognised. But the janissaries, whose influence quickly increased, developed into a formidable military power, and became the real masters of the country. They could appoint the Dey, and depose him at their will, of which privilege they fully availed themselves, for in a very short space of time twenty-three deys reigned at Tunis, all of whom were dethroned, and most of whom perished by a violent death.

This state of things lasted about half a century, till the power was usurped by two brothers, Ali and Mohammed, who, by their activity and intelligence, had succeeded in gaining the confidence, not only of the Tunisians, but also of the whole surrounding country. They threw off the military despotism of the janissaries, and Ali, the eldest, took the title of Bey, and established hereditary succession without election. His brother Mohammed succeeded him, but in the latter part of his reign Tunis was besieged and taken by the Dey of Algiers. Mohammed then sought the assistance of

the Arabs in the country, and forced the Dey to take flight (1695).

These Beys did not cast off all allegiance to the Porte, and the Sultan conferred on them the title of "Pacha with the Three Tails," a dignity which consisted of the right to have three horses' tails borne before them on occasions of ceremony. They also sent annually magnificent presents to the Sultan.

It was during Mohammed's reign, in 1685, that the first serious treaty with France was concluded, to protect the rights and privileges of those Frenchmen who had settled in Tunis; and old documents which are in the registers of the British Consulate show that about this time a treaty was also concluded with England, on account of the ill-treatment which the consuls of the respective nations had experienced at the hands of a pretender to the throne, also named Mohammed, who had temporarily usurped the supreme power. There is also a letter from James II., dated from Windsor in 1686, empowering Mr. Goodwyn to act as British agent and Consul-general, and confirming the treaty already made between Charles II. and the Bey. The Europeans were, however, exposed to many

dangers and difficulties during this turbulent period of piracy and constant usurpations.

In 1705 Hassan-ben-Ali ascended the throne, and founded the present dynasty. His origin was obscure, being the son of a Corsican slave, and he owed his elevation to his popularity with the army. For many years he had no children, and at last determined on appointing his nephew Ali Bey as his successor, who was already at the head of his army; but the advent of a son and heir, followed in due time by two other sons, naturally changed this arrangement, and the child received the name of Mohammed Bey and was recognised as the future sovereign by the Ottoman Porte. The Bey endeavoured to compensate his nephew by conferring on him certain dignities and privileges, but in vain, for he rebelled against him, obtained the help of the Dey of Algiers, who was always ready to foster dissensions in the reigning family at Tunis, and marched against Hassan-ben-Ali. A great battle was fought, in which Ben Ali was defeated. He took refuge at Kairwān, and then at Susa, a port on the eastern coast, but, on endeavouring to escape to Algiers, was discovered by Youmas-Bey, a son of Ali Pacha, who killed him with his own hands.

The new Dey of Algiers espoused the interests of the unfortunate Hassan-ben-Ali's sons, and Ali Bey ascended the throne in 1759. Under none of his predecessors had there been such peace and tranquillity as during the first eleven years of his reign, for he governed the kingdom with wisdom and intelligence. At this time the population amounted to 150,000, of whom 30,000 were Jews, who developed and absorbed the commerce of the country under the beneficent protection of the Bey.

Tunis was now menaced by Louis XV., the cause of the invasion being as follows:—

The island of Corsica, which was in the possession of the Genoese, revolted against them, and, after a long struggle, the Duke of Genoa, finding he could not conquer these determined islanders, implored the help of France. The French King, fearing that the Corsicans would seek the help of England, and that this important island would fall into her hands as Majorca and Gibraltar had already done, agreed to help them, on the condition that the Duke of Genoa should cede his rights over the island to him. At this time Tunis was at war with Corsica, and the Bey still continued to

carry on hostilities, ignoring the representations of the French ambassador. He also refused to liberate the Corsican slaves captured before the French possession, upon which the French fleet, aided by the Knights of St. John, appeared before Goletta, and bombarded the fort and the towns of Bizerta, Susa, and Monastir, on the coast.

At this juncture the Sultan sent a deputation from Constantinople to mediate between the hostile parties ; and having succeeded in establishing peace, the fleet returned to France. Soon afterwards, the Bey sent ambassadors to Versailles, who were received with great honour ; and from that time the two countries were on friendly terms. Ali Bey was a remarkable man in many ways, and the French expedition to Tunis had brought out certain traits of character which deserve to be recorded as showing his high sense of honour and generous sentiments. During the siege the French consul went on board one of the ships of war, and hostilities having commenced by the sinking of a small Tunisian ship, the French merchants living in the place requested permission to leave the town. This was immediately granted, and the Bey gave orders that the French commercial interests should be strictly

respected until the restoration of peace and the return of the French consul.

Ali Bey, having reigned twenty years, died in 1782, and was succeeded by his son Hamouda. This prince from his childhood had been noted for his precocious intelligence, which developed as he grew older, and rendered him exceedingly popular with his subjects. His reign of thirty-two years was celebrated for the justice and wisdom of his rule, and also for his courtesy to the strangers settled at Tunis, whose interests he warmly protected.

At this time great complaints were raised by most of the European powers against the Tunisian corsairs, who attacked all the merchant vessels, plundered them, and carried off the crews and passengers as slaves, and this notwithstanding the annual tributes which had been paid to the Bey for immunity from these pirates. It was resolved to take immediate measures for suppressing this system of levying blackmail, and after many negotiations Hamouda consented to conciliatory arrangements, but prudently opened up the entrance of the Porto Farina lake as a harbour of refuge for his fleet of corsairs.

The despotic power of the Beys at this time was boundless, and Hamouda being deprived by death of the valuable services of his minister and brother-in-law, Mustapha Khodjah, resolved to take the administration of affairs, and especially of justice, into his own hands. It is recorded that a Ragusan captain, having been found in a Jew's house in the company of a Moorish woman, was denounced to the Bey, who ordered all the three individuals to be brought before him, and being satisfied of the justice of the accusation, condemned the Ragusan to be beheaded, the woman to be drowned in the Lake of Tunis, and the Jew to be burnt alive in the city, which sentence was immediately carried into execution.

The latter part of Hamouda's reign was disturbed by an insurrection among the Turks at Tunis, whose power he had long sought to weaken and restrain. A conspiracy was formed to massacre Hamouda and all his adherents, but was discovered in time to save their lives. The Turks, however, after pillaging the shops in the town and setting fire to them, took possession of the Kasba, which was guarded by a Turkish garrison, and strongly entrenched themselves there, elected a new Bey,

and opened a brisk cannonade on the town. The affrighted population took arms, the Bey collected all his soldiers on whom he could trust, and the French consul, M. Devoize, offered the services of a company of French artillery which had just arrived from Malta, having been made prisoners by the English, who sent them to the French consul. This offer was accepted, and such a well-directed fire was opened on the Kasba, that the Turks were compelled to abandon the fortress and take flight. The Bey gave orders not to pursue them, knowing they would fall into the hands of the Arabs posted in the environs. This was what in fact happened, and the Bey rewarded the Bedouins by abandoning the spoils to them, which were considerable, being the money, jewels, and precious stuffs pillaged from the shops in the town. Thus ended this formidable insurrection, which annihilated the power of the janissaries in Tunis.

Hamouda's reign was of much longer duration than those of his predecessors, and he died a natural death, whereas most of the other Beys had perished by the hands of assassins. He was succeeded by his brother Othman in 1814, who was no exception to the general rule, and was murdered with his

children three months after his accession, his cousin Mahmoud replacing him. It was during this reign that the European powers, seeing that half measures were of no avail, determined to act energetically in concert, and no longer submit to the system of bribery offered to the Bey, under the name of tribute, for protecting their subjects from the Barbary corsairs, who, emboldened by success, laid hands on persons of all nations, and sold them as slaves.

One of the islands on the coast of Sardinia had been lately attacked by them, and all the inhabitants carried off, without regard to age or sex. Admiral Fremantle had already appeared before Goletta with the Mediterranean fleet, and had obtained the liberation of some five hundred Christian slaves. The French had, through their consul, M. Devoize's energy, set at liberty the Italian slaves by the payment of a small ransom; the Austrians, backed by the Sultan, had made terms for themselves; and, later on, the Dutch sent their fleet, under Admiral Jurien, to enforce their demands for a cessation of piracy. But on hearing of this last outrage on Sardinia, the English Government dispatched Lord Exmouth in 1816 to demand

the final abolition of Christian slavery. And here I cannot do better than to copy an extract from Mr. Broadley's excellent work on Tunis, entitled "The Last Punic War":—

"It happened that at this very time Caroline Princess of Wales was enjoying the splendid hospitality of Mahmoud Bey in his City Palace. Neither party seemed inclined to yield, and matters assumed a very threatening aspect. The mediation of the royal guest was invoked in vain. Lord Exmouth was inexorable. The princess sent the greater part of her baggage to Goletta, the British merchants hastened to embark on board the vessels of the squadron, the men-of-war were prepared for action, and the Bey did his best to collect all available reinforcements."

The excitement in Tunis became intense, and a pacific solution was considered almost impossible. On the 16th of April Lord Exmouth, accompanied by Mr. Consul-General Oglander and his staff, proceeded to the Bardo Palace. The flagstaff of the British Agency was previously lowered to indicate a resolution to resort to an appeal to arms in case of failure, and the Princess of Wales expected every hour to be arrested as a hostage.

The antecedents of the Bey were not precisely calculated to assuage her alarm, but Mahmoud sent one of his officers to assure her that, come what may, he should never dream of violating the Moslem laws of hospitality.

While the messenger was still with her, Lord Exmouth entered the room, and announced the satisfactory termination of his mission. On the following morning the Bey signed a treaty whereby, in the name of the Regency, he abolished Christian slavery for ever throughout his dominions. Amongst the reasons which induced the Bey to yield to the pressure used by Lord Exmouth was the detention of the Sultan's envoy, bearing the imperial firman and robe of investiture, at Syracuse. The Neapolitan Government would not allow him to depart until the news of the successful result of the British mission had arrived, and Mahmoud felt it impossible to forego the official recognition of his suzerain.

The visit of the wife of George IV. to Tunis is hardly yet quite forgotten. The Bey gave her a guard of honour composed of sixty mamelukes, and during her stay a coach and six was always kept in readiness for her use. The most prominent member of her suite was Count Bergami de Brescia

who suggested a variety of amusements which comprised a fête champêtre amongst the orange groves of the Manouba, and picnics on horseback to the ruins of Carthage, Utica, and Zaghouan. The Princess was extremely displeased at Lord Exmouth's inopportune arrival, and was not even consoled by the salute of 101 guns fired on her departure for Greece, the day after the signature of the treaty.

Mahmoud was succeeded by his son Hussein Bey whom he had already associated with him in the power. This prince followed the example of his father, encouraged the visits of Europeans to Tunis, and afforded every facility to the scientific men who came to explore the ruins of Carthage. He also re-organised his army, and sent for European officers to instruct his soldiers. A Tunisian ambassador was sent to the court of Charles X. of France, and assisted at the coronation of that monarch, being received with great distinction.

The war between France and Algiers now broke out, the cause for discontent being the delay in certain monetary transactions between the two powers. The Dey, forgetting his usual circumspection, ques-

tioned the French Consul too closely in the presence of his court. Monsieur Deval replied haughtily that the King of France could not correspond with a chieftain of pirates without compromising his dignity. The Dey, furious at this insult, struck Monsieur Deval a blow with his peacock fan and poured out a torrent of abuse against the French king, and Christians in general. M. Deval left Algiers and carried his complaint to the French government. War was decided upon, and a powerful fleet set sail from Toulon under the command of Admiral Duperre, who soon succeeded in conquering the country, and an end was for ever put to the shameful tributes which until then, in spite of Lord Exmouth's convention in 1816, the different European powers had paid to a handful of pirates. England, France, the United States, Holland, Hanover, Sweden and Denmark, Spain and Portugal, and other smaller states had all paid tribute in money or other ways.

The Bey of Tunis had maintained a strict neutrality in the war between France and Algiers, and now in 1830 a new Franco-Tunisian treaty was concluded, and the Bey presented Louis Philippe with some rising ground which dominated the ruins

of Carthage, for the purpose of erecting a chapel to the memory of St. Louis.

Hussein Bey died in 1835, leaving his brother Mustapha to succeed him, who only lived two years. Sidi Ahmed, his son, then ascended the throne, and the events of his reign may be expressed by two words, Progress and Civilisation.

On the representations of the different consuls, he declared that all children born of slave parents should be free, and soon afterwards he abolished the slavery of men of colour, emancipating those of his own household, which generous example was universally followed by his subjects. In 1842 the slave-market was closed at Tunis, and severe penalties were issued against all those who should transgress the law.

But here, perhaps, it will be well to give a short account of the treatment of slaves at Tunis.

In the early ages the Christians were exposed to frightful tortures, but as civilisation progressed it began to be understood that it was wiser to get money by their labour or their ransom. The celebrated St. Vincent de Paul, who, as is well known, was carried off by corsairs in 1604, during his passage to Narbonne, gives a graphic account of this

event. During the attack he received a shot from an arrow, which served as an internal clock during the rest of his life. When he arrived at Tunis his captor led him about the streets with a chain round his neck to be sold, like an animal at a fair, to the highest bidder. He was forced to open his mouth and show the state of his teeth, and to trot and run like a horse to show his paces, and at last was sold to a fisherman who, finding him a bad sailor, parted with him to an old alchemist, who had been trying for the last fifty years to discover the philosopher's stone. Here he was kindly treated, but his employer dying, he again changed masters, and became the property of a renegade from Nice, whose wife, being a Christian, protected him, till ultimately he made his escape to France.

Some time afterwards, he dispatched a monk of the name of Guérin under the protection of the French Consul, to administer the consolations of religion to his suffering brothers in captivity. This priest gained the admiration of the Tunisians, by his noble and self-sacrificing labours during the plague which was then devastating the country, and to which he fell a victim. St. Vincent de Paul himself ransomed 12,000 slaves for an immense sum.

Of later years each nation had its separate dwelling-house where the corsairs brought their captives. Here they were fed and lodged, and made to work at their own trades, while others were obliged to work as servants. A fixed sum was daily remitted to their masters from the proceeds of their work, and the remainder they were allowed to keep.

In 1846 the Bey visited France, and was everywhere received with great honour. He inspected most of the public buildings in Paris, and was much gratified by his reception. The Duc de Montpensier had visited Tunis the year before, and Louis Philippe had sent the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour to the Bey. Sidi Ahmed had intended visiting England, but some difficulty arose about his being received as an independent sovereign, for in fact the regency had always been a fief of the Ottoman Porte, and the project was abandoned. But the next year presents were sent by the English Government of Axminster carpets, and other things, and the Bey often had recourse to the advice of Sir Thomas Reade, the able and intelligent British Consul-General at Tunis, for he knew that France had cast a longing eye on the

regency, and that England maintained his equilibrium between that country and the Porte. Indeed, he had written to Lord Palmerston the following words: "Only one thing can be worse for Tunis than its extinction by the Porte, and that is, its absorption by France."

The Bey after a visit of six weeks returned to Tunis, and during his voyage, having been informed that some danger existed for navigators in the vicinity of Cape Blanc, immediately gave directions for the building of a lighthouse, thus terminating his pilgrimage to the centre of civilisation by an act of philanthropic benevolence. He was received by his subjects with the greatest enthusiasm.

In the summer of 1849 Sir Thomas Reade died, and by desire of the Bey his remains were honoured by a splendid funeral. Sidi Ahmed himself died in 1855, and was the last of the Beys who exercised even a shadow of that despotic power for which they had been so long celebrated.

His cousin Mohammed began his reign by instituting many useful reforms. He endowed the regency with a new constitution, embodying first religious equality, thus protecting his Israelitish

subjects; secondly, a common law of taxation for all classes; thirdly, permission to foreigners to possess land and exercise trades. The constitution contained many other liberal provisions, which it would be too long to enumerate.

Before granting this constitution it must be acknowledged that a strong pressure had been put upon the Bey by the consuls of the different European powers. Mr. Wood, who was then English Consul, and Monsieur Roches, the French Consul, had gone to the Bey to lodge an energetic complaint of the treatment of a Jew, who had been condemned to death by the Cadi for having execrated the Bey and his government, in consequence of his ill treatment by Moslems. A quantity of molten lead had been poured down the unfortunate man's throat, and his head had been cut off and tossed about the streets. A general panic ensued; several ships of war arrived at Goletta, in answer to the appeals made to the European powers, and Mr. Wood and Monsieur Roches made such forcible representations to the Bey as led to the formation of the constitution.

In 1857 the Emperor Napoleon III. conferred the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour on the

Bey as a recognition of these concessions, and the English Government sent a present of cotton seed, with instructions as to its culture. This was followed by a visit from Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, whose arrival gave unbounded satisfaction to Sidi Mohammed. This reign was also remarkable for the restoration of the aqueduct of Carthage, which conducts the famed waters of Zaghouan to Tunis.

In 1859 the Bey died, and was succeeded by his brother, Mohammed-es-Sadok, who confirmed the new constitution, and took solemn oaths to respect it in the presence of his ministers and the foreign representatives. His first action was to send his minister, General Khayr-ed-Dyn, to Constantinople to solicit the usual firman or patent of investiture from the Sultan. He was received with signal distinction, being lodged in a royal palace with a guard of honour, and carriages were appointed for his service. Finally the general returned to Tunis, bearer of an autograph letter from the Sultan to his highness, and decorations of rare value. Ali Bey, the secretary of the Sultan, arrived shortly afterwards, and the investiture was publicly performed. The Bey had announced his

accession to Queen Victoria; but though Lord John Russell had written a most cordial answer, his highness was disappointed at not receiving an autograph letter from Her Majesty.

In 1860, the Emperor Napoleon and the Empress Eugenie went to Algiers, and Mohammed-es-Sadok arrived the same day to welcome them. A grand fantasia then took place, under the direction of General Yousouf. About 10,000 horsemen galloped wildly before the imperial tent, discharging their arms, and a charge of twelve squadrons of Spahis traversed the plain like a whirlwind. Then followed races with gazelles and ostriches. The Algerian chiefs tendered their homage to the Emperor, and offered a horse splendidly caparisoned in gold for his acceptance. The Bey was proud to present the Emperor with a manuscript, entitled—"The Code of Laws of the Constitution of the Regency of Tunis." Splendid presents were exchanged, and the Bey returned to Tunis exceedingly pleased with the results of his visit; and soon after he sent for the British ambassador to his palace at the Bardo, and, after relating to him what had taken place, remarked that it was necessary to conciliate such a powerful neighbour

as the Emperor of the French. He also sent a copy of the Code to the Queen, saying, "that at her wish his cousin Ahmed had abolished slavery, and that at England's suggestion he now granted liberty and freedom to his subjects."

The Council Chambers and Law Courts were now formally opened, without any of the opposition which had been anticipated from the Moslems to this sudden transition from an old to a new government. Mohammed then went in state to the Bardo, and in the throne-room renewed the oath of adherence to the new constitution before the principal chiefs of the Regency and the representatives of the foreign powers. In the evening the famous Court and Staircase of Lions were splendidly illuminated.

In 1862, the Prince of Wales and the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia visited Tunis, and "assurances were given to the Bey that as long as he carried out his present policy he might reckon on the support of England."

In this year Mohammed-es-Sadok contracted his first loan with Messrs. Oppenheim and Erlanger, and from that time the financial embarrassments of the regency grew and multiplied.

The expenses of the seraglio were enormous, and the Bey was surrounded by favourites, who entered his service without a sou, and in a short time made scandalous fortunes. The first loan was followed by others, the taxes were doubled, and the oppressed Arabs revolted on all sides. Many of the towns in the regency were attacked and pillaged, and the whole country was in a state of trouble and revolt. The Kroumirs, a hardy tribe of mountaineers, had rebelled against the obnoxious taxes, and Adil, the brother of the Bey, was sent against them, who, after some time, succeeded in restoring order. Several British, French, and Italian ships had appeared at Goletta, in consequence of the representations of the consuls that life and property were not in safety at Tunis, and joint action was determined upon. The Bey was advised to repeal the obnoxious taxes; and the dismissal of his Prime Minister, Mustapha, who, it was asserted, had amassed great riches by unfair means, was insisted upon. The French Emperor pointed out to the Bey that the Arabs did not approve of the changes he had made, and preferred the summary justice to which they had always been accustomed. In fact, Tunis now presented the rare spectacle of

a government more liberal than the people, who clung to their ancient prejudices and traditions, while their sovereign desired to place his country on a level with the most civilised nations of Europe.

In the spring of 1865 Prince Arthur, the Duke of Connaught, visited Tunis, and was most hospitably entertained, and in the following July the Bey received the insignia of the Order of the Bath from the hands of Lord Yelverton. But all these foreign decorations contributed nothing to the prosperity of the country. The finances were in a hopeless state of confusion; the sources from which the Bey derived his revenues had dwindled into an insignificant sum, for owing to the scarcity of rain for some three or four years the olives and cereal productions had failed; added to which, famine, cholera, and typhus followed. In the year 1868 a third of the tribes in certain districts perished from these causes. The Bey having been informed of a conspiracy against his person, seized upon two of the principal members of his council, and ordered them to be strangled at the Bardo—an incident rather at variance with his liberal and enlightened reforms.

The Bey and his government were now on the verge of ruin and bankruptcy, and it was determined that a Financial Commission should be organised between England, France, and Italy to pay the interest of the loans due to the different European merchants who had advanced money to the Bey and also of the State bonds which remained unpaid. The flight of the State Treasurer, carrying with him immense sums, the consequences of the famine and the expenses of the insurrection, with the shameless plunder of his favourites, had all contributed to bring Mohammed-es-Sadok to this state of complete insolvency.

The Bey now sent General Khayr-ed-Dyn to Stamboul, and the result of this visit was a firman by which the Sultan decreed that the annual tribute which had been paid since 1575 should be abolished, that the Bey should not make war on foreign powers without his consent, that he should be ready to aid the Sultan in all emergencies, and that the current coin should continue to be struck in his name.

Amongst the useful institutions of this reign should be named the foundation of the College Sadiki by General Khayr-ed-Dyn, where 150

children were taught French gratuitously, and the same system of education was pursued as that in the French Lycées. A railway was laid down from Tunis to Goletta by an English company, owing to the activity of Mr. Wood. There were also projects for lighting up the streets with gas, and permission to open an English bank had been granted by the Bey.

At this time General Khayr-ed-Dyn fell into disfavour, and he was informed that his services were no longer needed. Mustapha Ben Ismail, whose name is so well known in Europe, replaced him. His origin was very obscure. As a child he had picked up a living as best he could, then he was apprenticed to a barber, and afterwards was servant to an officer. He gradually rose to be Prime Minister of Tunis, when he received high honours and foreign decorations from several of the European powers. During this time M. Roustan was French chargé d'affaires at Tunis, and he readily perceived that Italy was obtaining an undue preponderance in Tunisian affairs. Mustapha had been sent to congratulate King Humbert on his accession to the throne, and a close Italian alliance seemed probable. M. Roustan immediately claimed

a mission to Paris to render the same courtesy to Marshal MacMahon, the President of the Republic. This was granted, and Mustapha was dispatched to Paris, where conferences on important matters took place, and the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour was conferred upon him by M. de Saint-Hilaire.

The Berlin Congress took place in 1878, and then it was that Count Bismarck is reported to have said to M. Waddington, "Take Carthage!" He, however, declared that it was not his intention to act upon this hint, though no other European power would be allowed to occupy the place.

Sir Richard Wood now left Tunis, and Mr. Thomas Reade, the son of Sir Thomas Reade, was appointed Consul-general, and here I must quote Mr. Broadley's words: "During the fifty years that Sir Thomas Reade and Sir Richard Wood represented Great Britain in Tunis the name of England was honoured and esteemed from one end of the country to the other. Mr. Reade only came to see the end alike of Tunisian independence and British prestige; but, while keenly sharing the sorrow of the Tunisians themselves, he has faithfully obeyed the orders of his superiors." Since

this was written, in 1882, Mr. Reade left Tunis in March, 1885, and the sad news of his death arrived here in April.

I must here mention two incidents which have just been related to me by an old resident in Tunis, and which took place some years ago. It seems it was the custom of the Bey to have a great chain placed across the entrance to the Bardo, that no one might approach his august presence except on foot. One day Sir Thomas Reade drove there to see his Highness, and on arriving at the entrance to the palace the carriage stopped. "Drive on," said Sir Thomas to the coachman. "I can't, Sir Thomas; the great chain is up." "Drive over it, then, or turn round and go home," accompanied by sundry expletives. The man wheeled round his horses, and started off at a rapid pace. The Bey meanwhile had seen from the palace what was going on, and recognised the British consul's liveries. He at once despatched an aide-de-camp, who galloped after the carriage, and begged Sir Thomas to return, and that the obnoxious chain should be removed. But the British representative was inexorable, and said, "Tell the Bey to have that chain down for every one, not only for me!"

He returned some days afterwards, and satisfied himself that the chain really had been taken down.

Another trait of his determined will, where he felt there was injustice shown, was this. A Greek gunsmith had established himself in one of the Souks, and pursued his trade. An Arab brought him his gun to repair, and on being asked if it were loaded, at once said, "No." The gunsmith pressed the trigger, and, the gun being unfortunately loaded, the poor Arab received the whole charge in his head, which was literally blown off. At the noise of the report a crowd of natives rushed in, screaming and vociferating that the man had been murdered by the gunsmith. In vain he related what had occurred. The infuriated Mussulmans would speedily have torn him in pieces had not the police come to his rescue and conveyed him to prison. The Greek community, in great alarm, went to Sir Thomas Reade, and implored his aid. He at once drove to the Bardo, and asked to see the Bey, and told him the whole thing was an accident. "Well," said the Bey, "what do you want?" "I want the man," said Sir Thomas. "But I have not got him here; he is in prison at Tunis." "Send for him, then, for I do not budge

from here till I have him." The Bey actually did send for him. Sir Thomas put him into his carriage, and drove off to Marsa, where he was then staying, and handed him over to his own people, saying, "Here's the man; ship him off at once," advice which they quickly followed.

I shall pass very cursorily over the events and political intrigues which followed each other in quick succession at Tunis, and which have been most ably described by the witty and incisive pen of Mr. Broadley, the correspondent of the *Times*, during the war in Tunis, under the title of "The Last Punic War," and to whom I am indebted, as well as to Dr. Louis Frank, M. de Souhesmes, and other distinguished authors, for much of my information.

The alleged cause of the invasion and subjection of the country by the French in 1881 was the continual depredations of the Kroumirs on the Algerian frontier, the real fact being that the Algerians trespassed equally on the Tunisian frontier, and the limits were far from being clearly defined, and no one had paid any attention to the border disputes, which were continually taking place, till it was convenient to do so. It was

suggested to Mohammed-es-Sadok that he had better send his brother, Ali Bey, the heir apparent, and Generalissimo of all his forces, to reduce the Kroumirs to submission, which accordingly was done. Still the invasion was persisted in. M. Roustan endeavoured to coerce the Bey into the acceptance of a French protectorate. At last he was obliged to yield to strong pressure, and the famous treaty of Kassar-Saïd was signed in the palace at the Bardo, between the French Republic and the Bey of Tunis, on May 12th, 1881. One of the articles of the convention was that a resident French plenipotentiary minister should remain at Tunis to aid the Bey by his counsels.

All Europe had been ringing with the horrible stories got up of the atrocities committed by the unfortunate Kroumirs, who thus were made into a concentrated political scapegoat. Large placards were posted up in London and in Paris detailing all their iniquities, the truth being that they were a hardy race of mountaineers, inured to fatigue, having always resisted the collectors of taxes sent by the Bey, and often opposing a successful defence behind the shelter of their inaccessible mountains. They were, as we have seen, always ready to make

a raid on the Algerian frontier, which gave rise to frequent complaints. In fact, their depredations and quarrels much resembled those which existed in olden time between the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland. If a ship happened to be wrecked on their coast, they unscrupulously appropriated everything it contained, and plundered the people on board. But, independently of their love of pillage, the Kroumirs resembled most of the other Mussulmans. They cultivated their soil with success, were great cattle-breeders, lived in miserable huts or tents, brought up their children as well as they could, and worked as little as possible. They follow the precepts of Mahomet, and are very superstitious, believing in good and bad genii, but no trace is to be found of those barbarous customs imputed to them in 1881.

Their country is rich in magnificent forests, and possesses iron-mines in abundance. One mountain-peak, named Sidi Abdalla, is held in great veneration by them. It is so called from the name of a marabout who lived here and was known for his good deeds. When they saw the Zouaves lancés at this mountain, and scaling it like cats in the chasse aux Kroumirs, all confidence abandoned them. In

their ignorant and almost touching credulity, they believed themselves invulnerable under the powerful ægis of their beloved saint; for an ancient legend recorded that a Tunisian army invading this country had been destroyed at the foot of the mountain by a storm of bullets lancés by the spirit of Sidi Abdalla. The Zouaves, however, took good care that there should be no renewal of the miracle.

When the bubble burst, and the truth was known in France, the whole expedition was turned into ridicule there, as in other countries. The *Charivari*, *Lanterne*, and other French papers were merciless in their caustic remarks. The truth of the French proverb "Le ridicule tue," was keenly felt. Many Parisians obstinately refused to believe in the existence of the Kroumirs at all, and did not do justice to the French troops, who undoubtedly suffered much from the great heat, fever and dysentery making great havoc amongst them, and medicines and other necessaries being everywhere wanting. Their patience and cheerfulness were exemplary, and their bravery in the different engagements which took place, as usual, incontestable; but the expedition had been under-

taken lightly, and the preparations for it were insufficient.

Before the war broke out the Bey had appealed to England, and addressed a long letter to Lord Granville of complaint against the French. He also wrote in the same terms to the Sultan and to the King of Italy; but there was much delay caused by the negotiations between the European powers, and in the meantime the fate of Tunis was sealed.

As I have already said, the treaty of Kassar-Saïd, in which palace the Bey and his Prime Minister Mustapha resided, was signed. Mohammed-es-Sadok was enfeebled by illness, broken-hearted at the invasion of his country, and utterly powerless to prevent it, however; moreover, his treasury was empty. Under these circumstances he was obliged to accept the terms dictated to him. I cannot resist reproducing the article in *Vanity Fair*, written by Mr. Broadley at the time, which gives a very graphic, though a burlesque, account of what took place:—

"Scene.—The Kassar-Saïd Palace at Tunis. Time.—The 26th February. *Dramatis personæ.*—The Bey of Tunis and his councillors. Both the

Bey and his favourite Mustapha wear their Grand Cordons of the Legion of Honour. An interpreter announces that M. Roustan is in attendance with General Musalli to take leave. Handkerchiefs are distributed. An order to weep is given. Mohammed-es-Sadok.—'We must be very careful. This is the third time he has gone away; but he always comes back. Roustan is a cat; Roustan has nine lives.' (All begin to weep. Roustan enters with his friend.) Bey.—'Good-bye, my dearest friend.' (Here he pauses from agitation, and both he and Mustapha repeatedly embrace the Minister after the Oriental usage.) Bey continues in a voice broken by sobs.—'Allah has sent me many misfortunes; but your going is undoubtedly the greatest of them all. What shall I and poor Mustapha do without you? What will become of my country in your absence? Alas! alas! Tunis is undone! The Almighty is indeed too cruel when He deprives me of my friend and guide.' (The Bey weeps on Roustan's neck; Roustan and Musalli weep in chorus. Roustan is conveyed from the room deeply affected.) Roustan (aside to Musalli on the staircase).—'Why, he has not even given me a parting present! At least I expected

a diamond snuff-box or another order. Can it be that even with me it is a case of "le roi est mort, vive le roi?" (The Bey watches Roustan's carriage disappear from the window. He turns to his courtiers; he laughs; he cries; at last he dances.)

"Bey.—'Now I am Bey again! Roustan is gone at last, and I breathe once more. May Allah convey his soul expeditiously to the bottomless pit! May the angels of death be his guards and keepers! May the curses of a ruined and desolated country rest upon his head! May the Prophet cause the dark waves of the Atlantic'—with a lofty disregard of geography, as M. Roustan was going to Marseilles—'to overwhelm him,'" &c. &c.

Mohammed-es-Sadok died in October, 1882, and Sidi Ali Bey, his brother, accompanied by M. Paul Cambon, the French Resident Minister, went to the Bardo next day, where he was invested with the supreme power, and recognised by the members of the Bey's family and the high Tunisian functionaries. Monsieur Cambon, after a speech, in which he assured the Bey that he could always count upon the aid and support of France, presented him with the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour.

The funeral of Sidi Mohammed took place the next day, at the cemetery of the Tourba, reserved solely for the burial of the Beys. Taib Bey, the brother of both Mohammed-es-Sadok and the reigning sovereign, was the chief mourner. He now became commander-in-chief of the army. The *cortège* was splendid, consisting of all the consuls and representatives of the foreign powers in full uniform, the religious corporations of the town, the high officers of State, and the principal inhabitants of Tunis, followed by an immense crowd. The French and Tunisian troops lined the road. It took two hours for the procession to arrive at Tunis; and on entering the town the band of the Zouaves played several funeral airs, until they arrived at the Kasba, or citadel, where the procession stopped, and prayers were said over the bier.

The access to the Tourba is exceedingly narrow, and the agglomeration of Mussulmans made it difficult to enter until the soldiers had cleared the way. The body was then taken out of the bier, wrapped in a simple shroud, and committed to the earth. After the grave had been filled, a layer of bricks and cement was placed over it,

according to universal custom. Prayers were again offered up, and the ceremony was at an end. It is worthy of remark that this is the first instance of foreigners being allowed to follow the funeral *cortège* of a Tunisian sovereign.

Ali Bey's conduct since his accession justifies the good opinion formerly entertained of him. He follows the advice of M. Cambon, and has already made several wise reforms in the administration of justice. The power of the consuls has been restricted, and judicial authority substituted. A law is being made for the regulation of deeds and estates, after the principle of the "Torrens Law," which has been applied with such success in Australia. This was most necessary to protect the interests of foreigners who buy property here, for it often happens that persons buying land are persecuted afterwards with a series of interminable law-suits, on account of claims being brought by pretended proprietors; and as the limits are not clearly defined, it was dangerous with the existing laws to buy estates. Several roads have been made in the vicinity of Tunis, which lead to Marsa, Manouba, Goletta, and Hamman-el-Lif.

A Syndicate has been lately formed at Tunis

for commercial laws, and to protect mercantile interests the Tunisian debt has been guaranteed by the French Government, and the financial commission instituted by the European powers dissolved. The expediency of a port at Tunis has been strongly urged, and the works will shortly be commenced. The adoption of the same tariff in Tunis as in Algeria for native productions is also earnestly desired. But the reforms take long to effect, and it is feared for the present this will continue to be the case.

The person who has done the most for the civilisation of the regency is Monseigneur Lavigerie, the Cardinal and Archbishop of Carthage. He first founded the College of St. Louis for young men near the chapel built in Louis Philippe's reign on the ruins of Carthage. He has also built a cathedral at Tunis, and a convent for young girls. Marsa, which is the residence of the present Bey, is also inhabited by the primate, where he has a palace in a beautiful situation ; it is about eight miles from Tunis. His arrival from Algeria and nomination as cardinal was the signal of an enthusiastic ovation, and his investiture took place in the midst of a splendid assemblage at Carthage in the college

founded by him, the French Minister Resident, M. Cambon, the French naval and military officers, the foreign representatives, and high Tunisian dignitaries being present. Monseigneur Lavigerie had done all in his power to conciliate the conflicting interests in the regency, and his efforts were properly appreciated.

After the investiture by Count Cechini of the Papal Guards, the cardinal, who is a magnificent-looking man, addressed the assembly as follows—"I am almost overwhelmed at receiving these honours in this place. The ruins of Carthage which surround us are at once emblems of human greatness, and the vanity of earthly magnificence. It was from the spot on which we are now standing came the conquerors of Africa—the great captains who for a moment caused the fate of Rome to tremble in the balance. What names are those of Mago, Hanno, Hamilcar, Hannibal, and Hasdrubal, who upon this very hill saw his fatherland in flames and his children slaughtered in the temple, the remains of which at this moment surround us. What names are those of Regulus, Scipio, Marius, Cæsar, Justinian, and Belisarius, and in more modern times those of Louis the Ninth and

Charles the Fifth. Each of them left upon this spot the memorials of his deeds and his glory. But what a lesson as to the vanity of man presents itself! Not a trace of these memorials remains, and one must excavate even to know that it was here that Carthage existed! The name of Carthage is as famous in the history of the Church as it is in that of the world at large. The very earth we now tread on has been trodden by the feet of such eloquent divines as Tertullian, Augustine, and Fulgencius, by such admirable saints as Eugenia, Monica, Felicita, and Perpetua, and by such bishops as Cyprian, who in his person represented all the glories of Christian Carthage. Once more, after the lapse of centuries, the cross crowns the summit of this famous hill, and I see before me European colonists of all the great nations of the South who have come to exercise their art and industries in this country. To them I have a mission, and it is to preach to every one of them charity, union, and peace. I trust the day is not far distant when all contention will cease, and when every Christian inhabitant of this country, no matter to what nation he may belong, will work cheerfully and earnestly for the good and progress of the country of his adoption."

Ali Bey is not without trouble in his own family. His brother Taib, the heir-apparent and commander in-chief of the army, is a man of weak character and given to spending money. Indeed, his extravagance is so great that not a fortnight ago his goods and chattels were seized, and would have been sold by auction had not the Bey come to the rescue. Taib, having been dazzled by reports of the attractions of Paris, which he had never visited, and tired of the monotonous life he led in Tunis, under the surveillance of the Bey, listened in a weak moment to the interested advice of his friends, and determined to depart secretly for the fascinating capital without the ceremony of taking leave of his brother. The Bey, however, having private information of his intentions, caused his palace to be surrounded by a cordon of soldiers, who opposed his departure, and poor Taib, prisoner in his own house, had to make his submission to his brother. Future history will show whether Taib Bey's wishes will ever be accomplished, but as this is the last event of importance in the annals of the regency, I shall here close my very imperfect epitome of the history of Tunis.

CHAPTER II.

Journey from Cannes to Tunis—Quarantine—First Impressions—Visit to an Arabian Family—Fast of the Ramadân.

We left Cannes for Marseilles the 10th of September, 1884, taking with us our two servants, Barthélemy and Thérèse, a young married couple, who had conducted themselves so well during our misfortunes, and who had begged to accompany us, and also my little Maltese dog Perrita. The next day we embarked on board the *Charles Quint* at five in the afternoon, and admired greatly the lovely view on leaving the harbour. When the dinner-bell rang, we bravely took our seats, but soon "a change came o'er the scene," and one by one we disappeared, and I was obliged to remain in my cabin till late the following day.

On the 13th we arrived at Philippeville, and here we had to remain five days in quarantine, outside the harbour, opposite the little town of Stora. Fortunately there were agreeable people on board, and amongst them a French family consisting of the mother and three daughters, one

of whom was married to a French officer, and with her little girl was going to rejoin her husband. The child was terribly spoilt, and a perfect little tyrant to her very charming mother, who indulged her in every caprice.

We were glad to while away the time by working and reading, games at cards and backgammon, and the young people danced on the deck every evening, notwithstanding the heat, which was intense.

There were fortunately no cases of cholera on board, nor indeed of any illness, for which we had great cause to be thankful, as in the next boat which left Marseilles there were no less than twenty-one cases of cholera, of which ten were fatal.

We were allowed to land at Philippeville on the 18th, to our great delight, though there is really very little to be seen, it being a small town of about 10,000 inhabitants; but the fact of the landing being forbidden made it of course much to be desired, and we were tired of the steamer. We took a short drive, but saw nothing very interesting or worthy of record, except that we were astonished at the high dense hedges of prickly pear, forming impenetrable barriers.

In the afternoon, we steamed off to Bona, where we arrived late at night, and the next morning landed and visited the market, which was well provided with fish, fruit, and vegetables. Bona is one of the prettiest towns in Algeria, and here I saw the lovely red and pink hibiscus, flowering freely, in the pretty public garden. We proceeded the same day to La Calle, the last town on the Algerian frontier, but did not land, and the next day we arrived at La Goulette, the port of Tunis. The passengers all assembled on deck to enjoy the charming view of the town in the distance, and the ancient site of Carthage was pointed out to us, with the usual accompanying remark that here it was that the famous Roman general, Marius, wept at the sight of the venerable ruins of that once powerful city, which, like himself, had suffered so severely from the cruel vicissitudes of fortune.

Before entering the lake of Tunis, which joins the sea by means of a small canal, we were struck by the picturesque situation of the village of Sidi-bon-Said on a rock above the Cape of Carthage, which is only inhabited by natives, who are noted for their religious enthusiasm, and is looked upon as a place of great sanctity.

And now we had really arrived at the end of our voyage, and were about to enter the famous city of Tunis, so renowned in ancient history, and of which it has been said that once you have tasted its water and breathed its balmy air, an irresistible power for ever chains you to the spot. This remains to be seen, and I shall faithfully recount my impressions, when I have made acquaintance with "Tunis the Glorious," the "Abode of Felicity," the "White Bernous of the Prophet," as the ancients delighted to name her.

The stern realities of life now claimed our attention, and we set to work to collect our stray articles of luggage; and having taken leave of the captain and officers of the *Charles Quint*, and thanked them for their courtesy, we, with other passengers, got into the ship's steam launch, and were landed in about a quarter of an hour on a rough platform.

Here began an animated contest for our possessions by half-naked Arabs and negroes, whose clothing consisted of a coarse sack with holes for their heads, arms, and legs, making me think of the famous Parisian tailor who passed this judgment upon his country client, "Monsieur est vêtu, mais il

n'est pas habillé." These porters screamed and yelled at each other, and demanded exorbitant prices for carrying our luggage to the train, for there is a primitive line of railway, which was formerly laid down by the English, and has since been sold to the Italians.

We found we had missed the train, so we sat at the little restaurant, and amused ourselves by looking at a group of Jewesses, who had come to enjoy some country air. The first impression caused by their extraordinary costume can never be forgotten. They wore a very high conical gilt head-dress; a wide silken vest of bright blue or rose colour, trimmed with little black frills, reaching to the waist; tight-fitting trousers of white jaconet, and embroidered slippers. The little children were similarly attired, and certainly the style suited them better than their mothers, as these ladies were remarkable for their embonpoint.

At last the train was ready. It was full of Arabs in their handsome national costume, and several were accompanied by their wives closely veiled. One of these gentlemen tried to make friends with Perrita, who seemed quite frightened, and, in return, ungratefully tried to bite him. In half an

hour we were in Tunis, and having deposited our luggage in a carriage, we walked to the Grand Hotel, where we met many of our travelling companions. We were thankful to rest a while before dinner, the weather being oppressively hot, though it was the 21st of September.

In the evening we walked on the Marine, where our hotel was situated. The avenue is very wide and well kept, and has good houses on each side. Here are the different Consulates, the post and telegraph offices, also the palace of M. Cambon, the resident French minister, and it is the finest part of Tunis. We were agreeably surprised at meeting an old school-friend of my husband, now the head surgeon of the 4th Zouaves. Dr. Chauvain and his wife and family are living here, and were exceedingly kind in initiating us into the ways of Tunis.

The next day was Sunday, and I was directed to the English church, which was not far off. It stands in a pretty garden, and the English chaplain, Mr. Reichardt, informed me that the ground was a free gift of the Bey. For about fifty years an English service had been held in the chaplain's house; but Mr. Hope visited Tunis in 1878, and

on his return to England purchased a pretty little iron church, which he sent out as a gift from himself, together with a sum of money which had been subscribed in England for the expenses of placing it. The Christian Knowledge Society and the then Bishop of Gibraltar also contributed to this fund, and the whole property was vested in the hands of three trustees, the bishop, the British consul, and the chaplain. This latter gentleman is sent out by the London Jews' Society, and undertakes the English chaplaincy as well. I must also mention that the east window, which is of painted glass, was put up to the memory of Mr. Payne, an American, and the author of "Home, Sweet Home." There is an inscription on the window to this effect, with the date of his death at Tunis. About two years ago his body was disinterred in the presence of Mr. Reade, H.B.M. Consul, the then American Consul, and other distinguished persons; and, at the expense of an American gentleman, was sent to Washington, where a handsome monument was erected to Mr. Payne's memory.

And now I must describe my first walk in the Souks, or Bazaars, accompanied by Barthélemy. These Souks are very small and winding streets,

with a narrow chariot-road in the middle, like those at Pompeii, and small footways on each side, which are lined by shops, or recesses, where the vendor, in Arab attire, sits cross-legged on a shelf with a carpet on it, surrounded by his wares, and looking very much like a picture in its frame.

We first passed through the street Sidi Morgiani—not that the name was anywhere to be seen, but it is well known to any one who has visited Tunis—and we were soon in the midst of a motley throng, consisting of Jews and Jewesses in their unique costumes, Arabs in turbans and flowing white bernouses, with a long inner garment, called a "gaudoura," of some bright-coloured cloth, and red or yellow slippers. Some were on foot, and some, mounted on small donkeys, trotted briskly along, and utterly regardless of obstacles such as a newly landed and slightly bewildered Englishwoman who stood stock-still gazing at the strange and novel scene before her. There were a great many negroes, in white suits and coloured scarfs and turbans, making a fearful noise, some of them most curiously tattooed; then white figures glided past, wrapped loosely in white bernouses, with faces closely veiled, with the exception of their eyes, in

black bands of crape, giving them a weird and spectral appearance. These were Arab women, who never show their faces in the streets.

There were officers of the 4th Zouaves, now quartered here, and Chasseurs d'Afrique in their brilliant uniforms, and people of all nations, circulating with difficulty in the narrow street, speaking many tongues, and making a perfect Babel. In the midst of all, suddenly and noiselessly, appeared a gigantic camel, towering above the crowd, and calmly steering its way. This was enough for one day, and I beat a retreat to our hotel, and afterwards found no adequate words for expressing my delight and astonishment to my husband.

We remained at the Grand Hotel three or four days, and found the cuisine good; but the prices were somewhat high, and we changed into the Hotel Gigino, more in the Arab style, with a "patio," or inner hall, which was very cool and pleasant, and is to be found in all Arab houses.

Another peculiarity is the total absence of bells, and, after calling in vain for some time, a dim memory of "Arabian Nights' Tales" came over me, and I clapped my hands, upon which a stalwart negro rushed up, followed by a dusky housemaid,

to inquire what I wanted. Needless to say, I adopted this system ever afterwards.

We had a long and weary search for apartments, which are difficult to find in Tunis, and are generally unfurnished, but we were assisted most kindly by Mr. Reichardt and our French friends, and at last decided upon taking a house in the Rue Bab Zira, one of the main thoroughfares of Tunis. There are good shops in this street, and a fine market for fish, meat, game, fruit, and vegetables. The house belongs to a French lady who married an Arab general, and is a happy mixture of French and Arab style.

On entering, a narrow passage to the left leads to the kitchen and servants' room and a small garden, which was full of weeds. On the right, a marble staircase leads to a lofty square hall, paved with marble, and this is the "patio" to which I have already alluded. There are eight doors round this hall, which serves as our dining-room, and the walls are lined with earthenware tiles of different colours and patterns. The eight doors open into bedrooms, closets, and the drawing-room, which is very lofty, with a handsome ceiling in Arab carving. A verandah looks on to the garden, which is to the

west, the drawing-room and two bedrooms being to the east, and these are considered the best aspects in this country. We chose this house, though too large for ourselves, knowing that in all probability our friends Captain and Mrs. Dick would come and spend the winter with us, an arrangement most profitable and agreeable to us in every way, and which I am happy to say was carried out, as they arrived on the 19th November.

We took possession of the house as soon as possible, and roughed it as we could. On entering, we had an encounter with a half-wild cat, which flew at us all in turns, and poor Perrita was the special object of her attacks. At last my husband took his gun and killed the creature, or there would have been no peace or safety for my little dog, or for any of us.

None of the doors or windows shut properly, but fortunately we met by chance a French carpenter from dear Cannes, André by name, and he came to help us, and soon made us more comfortable: there was much to be done, and my husband felt anxious, as the sanitary arrangements were most defective, and the cholera at this time seemed to be making rapid strides towards Tunis.

Thus it was important to remedy the drainage as soon as possible; though, thank God, we were spared the calamity of having this dreadful disease here. So masons and carpenters were in requisition, and our landlady allowed us to make certain alterations.

The servants were thoroughly disenchanted with Tunis; they had raised their expectations very high, and thought not only to find gold in the streets, but an entirely new mode of existence, and an abundance of tropical fruits, shrubs, and flowers. Alas! this idyll was not to be realised. There were delicious grapes and pomegranates, but that was all; not a flower, except jessamine, which the Arabs mount on little wires, and stick bunches of it behind their ears, so that the flowers fall on their cheeks. There were a few common ugly bouquets in the market, which would not do at all after the lovely Cannes flowers.

But what struck me most unpleasantly was the total absence of trees in the vicinity of Tunis, and the unfinished state of many of the houses in the town, giving it a bare and ruinous appearance. Viewed from our roof, where there is a terrace, the city looks like one huge cemetery; the houses

are all white, with flat roofs, and the people dry their linen and even sleep there during the great heat of the summer.

At one time we thought of taking a real Arab house, but gave up the idea on account of the position in the heart of the Arab quarter. The paving, too, was bad, and this quarter is not lighted up at night, so that it would have been dangerous; besides which, there are no chimneys in these houses, and the damp is very injurious to those afflicted with rheumatic tendencies.

In this house I first saw the Arab curtain, made of sail-cloth, with its curious designs cut out in coloured cloth and sewn on. There were red and black hands, which represent those of Fatima, the mother of the Prophet, and are supposed to ward off the power of the evil eye. These hands are often to be seen on the doors of houses, and on cart harness. Silver ornaments are also made and worn as antidotes to this dreaded evil eye.

It is strange how the Arabs retain their originality in all parts of the world where they settle. Customs mentioned in the "Arabian Nights" tales, which are considered by many people as exaggerated and even fabulous, are, on the contrary,

perfectly true, and faithfully represent the Arab way of living to the present day. Their women are never allowed to go out without their faces being carefully covered, with the exception of the eyes, and this applies to all ranks. The ladies seldom walk out at all, except to visit the Souks, and then they have an embroidered shawl, or large handkerchief, over their heads, and hold it out before them with their hands, in order to see their way, and to be able to breathe. They are always attended by a negress, who carries their purchases, and who is arrayed in all the colours of the rainbow.

The Arab ladies are pleased to receive visits from Europeans of their own sex, and are very agreeable in their manners. I have been presented to several, and I must here relate my impressions of the first visit I paid, under the safe conduct of Madame Tombarel, the wife of Captain Tombarel, of the 4th Zouaves, who is an old friend of my husband's.

We first entered a vaulted passage, at the end of which was a door, at which we knocked, and were admitted by a negress in the strangest attire, for it consisted of a turban, a gay shawl draped tightly round her person, a coloured jacket, and

wooden clogs. We followed her into a handsome marble quadrangle, with rooms all round, and one storey above. The most extraordinary figure now advanced to meet us, and my friend told me she was the mistress of the house. She was a handsome woman, of about thirty, but painted according to their ideas of beauty, the eyebrows being stained with black, and forming two broad arches which met each other. The eyelids were stained with antimony, which gives a bright but hard expression to the countenance. The hands were dyed with the deep orange colour produced by henna, and the lips and gums with betel. She was dressed in white tight-fitting pantaloons, a wide, loose jacket of blue and yellow silk coming below the waist, called a "djebba," and what looked like a burnished helmet (kuffia) on her head, with a broad black ribbon over the upper part of the forehead, thus effectually concealing the hair.

Words can give but a faint idea of this striking ensemble; and I must say I found it difficult to keep my countenance. This lady is very rich, and received us very kindly, offering us some delicious coffee, made over a curious little stove in pottery. The Arabs excel in their way of making café noir,

which is never strained, and is handed in small double cups without saucers. The young daughter spoke a little French, so she served as our interpreter; and on rising to take leave she offered to show us the house. The bedrooms were simply furnished, and the beds were almost on the ground, lined by a row of hard cushions against the wall, which is often damp from the habit of using mortar which has been mixed with sea-water. The coverlets and curtains were of rich silk, but the beds themselves looked very hard and uncompromising. The Arab ladies like to get French or Italian furniture, although very commonplace; and I observed some common artificial flowers under tall globes, which they seemed to value exceedingly. The salon was a handsome, lofty room, with a fountain in the centre, and the walls were covered with the lovely Arab fretwork, looking like lace with its delicate carving.

Our next visit was to a family which consisted of a young lady living with her aunt and two brothers, the parents being both dead, the father having been a general in the Bey's army. Here again we were ushered into a court with rooms all round, or rather recesses, for there are no doors.

The ladies were seated on cushions, cross-legged, and were embroidering most beautifully in silver, on blue and rose silk, which was stretched tightly over a frame. Their dress was in the same style as I have just described, but simpler, and with fewer colours. The ladies are generally of "a deplorable plumpness" (to borrow an expression from a favourite book of mine), and the peculiar costume shows off their rounded contours to perfection, particularly when they loll about on the cushions. They welcomed us most pleasantly, for the Arabs are never deficient in courtesy or hospitality; and I may say here that the acquaintance with this family has been one of my chief pleasures at Tunis. A vast amount of curiosity was bestowed upon our dress, and I was requested to take off my bracelets, which they examined minutely, and asked the price of them, and if they were "bono, bono," for Arab ladies are very fond of jewellery. The young girl seemed intelligent, and talked to us; but, alas! not a word could we understand.

I was very anxious to learn to embroider in gold and silver, and having explained this to her by her young brother Abib, who speaks French, she kindly offered to teach me, and the following day I took

my first lesson. I fear she thought me very stupid, as the gold thread would twist in the most aggravating manner. She finally lent me the frame, which Thérèse carried off.

I discovered in due time that the aunt's name was Lalla Lashusha, "Lalla" signifying "Madame." This lady is subject to fits of depression, when she cries, seemingly without any cause, and at other times is in the highest spirits and is very amusing. They shake hands with me, and then kiss the part which has touched me; this habit is general among the Arabs, and is very courteous.

On New Year's Day I carried them little presents, which pleased them very much, and they greatly appreciated some Christmas cards which Mr. Dick and I had received. I went regularly two or three times a week for my lesson, and at last mastered the difficulty. On one occasion I saw on the landing-place of the first storey a pretty young creature dressed very like a columbine, who made signs to Mrs. Dick and me to go upstairs. This was Fatima, the wife of the eldest son; she is very lively and pleasant, and has three sweet little girls. Before leaving, she took out some strong perfume and rubbed it over our hair and faces; the scent

remained quite strong for weeks on my veil, which I carried to the perfumery Souk, where it was pronounced by a grave Moor to be Schnooda, a perfume to be found in all Arabian houses. Lalla Fatima showed us her smart clothes for fête days, as Lalla Raschid had also kindly done, and most lovely they were, velvet jackets embroidered heavily in gold, with trousers to match, and the usual pointed cone-like cap with long streamers, also worked in gold and silver. The Arab ladies delight in going to the baths, and this is their principal recreation, as they meet their friends there, but they are always accompanied by an old woman who acts as duenna.

In June the great fête of the year, Ramadân, is kept most rigorously. All Moslems observe it, except those who are ill and infirm, and old people, delicate women and children, are also exempt from its observance. When the new moon appears, the fast begins, and must be kept from sunrise until sunset. During the night the Islamites are permitted to feast and amuse themselves as they please, and they are not backward to avail themselves of this permission. Many among them retire to rest in the early morning, sleep all day and rise at four

or five o'clock in the afternoon, thus turning day into night, and reversing the order of things. The marabout, or priest, calls the people to prayers from the tops of the minarets about five minutes after sunset. Every one then ejaculates the following form of prayer, "O God, it is in obedience to Thy will that I have kept this fast, and I break it, thanking thee for all thy mercies vouchsafed to me, and beseeching thee to pardon my past and future sins." They then drink a glass of water, take their repast, smoke, and disperse to the various places of amusement, such as cafés chantants and small theatres, which are crowded.

The town is lighted up with coloured lamps and lanterns, the people swarm in the streets, there are hand-organs, Arab musicians with their monotonous strains, serpent-charmers, and here and there a group of Arabs, seated in a circle, listening to some exciting tale, in which the traditional story-teller, by his impassioned gestures and eloquent expressions, rich in poetic and Eastern imagery, succeeds so well in entrancing his auditors, who by turns melt into tears and wring their hands, or indulge in hearty merriment.

A few minutes before sunrise, men come round.

beating on drums, to announce the hour of the last meal, or rather refreshments, a cannon-shot is heard, and all relapses into gloom.

The Arab music consists of a mandoline with two strings, on which they play with a reed, others blow into an instrument like a hautbois, and emit plaintive sounds which are not without charm, and some sing with an accompaniment of a small drum.

Any one who has had any intercourse with the Mussulmans cannot fail to be struck by the way in which the name of the Eternal is constantly introduced into conversation; and this is done, not as an idle habit, but with a solemn and profound conviction that whether it be in the small or great actions of life, nothing can prosper without their having first invoked the aid of the Most High. Thus, in speaking of the future, we find this verse in the Koran: "Never say, I mean to do such and such a thing to-morrow, without adding, 'if it be the will of God.'" (Tu cha Allah). In all official documents the heading sentence is "Praise to God," or, "In the name of the gracious and merciful God," and this constant reference to the sacred name shows an entire submission to His will, as well as firm trust in His goodness and mercy.

It is well known how many points of resemblance exist between Islamism and Christianity The Koran is recognised as the Word of God revealed to His prophet Mohammed, and transmitted by him to the Arabs. Perhaps some of my readers may not be acquainted with the following particulars of the Islam belief, and will be interested by them. The Koran teaches the fall of man, and the implacable enmity of Satan to the human race. When a believer is visited by sorrow or misfortune, he recites the following verse: "We are of God, and we return to God. Praise be to Thee, O God! notwithstanding my trouble, I put my trust in Thee, and am resigned to Thy will." When strongly tempted to sin, he is enjoined to cry, "May Satan depart from me!" The Virgin Mary is recognised as the mother of Jesus and far above all other women, and our Saviour is called "The Eternal Word." His miraculous birth is recorded, and those who do not believe this, and that He is the worker of miracles, will have no part in Him.

In the Arab traditions it is stated that a young child and his mother, who were inhabitants of Jerusalem, had been forced to take refuge in Egypt to escape the persecution of the Jews. The child

was apprenticed to a dyer, and one day, his master being absent, he took pieces of stuff which were all to be dyed different colours, and threw them into a cauldron of boiling black dye. The dyer, on his return, was in despair at this apparently stupid action; but what was his surprise, on taking out the pieces of stuff, to find that each had taken the colour desired! A great prophet was thus revealed by this miracle, and his name was Aïssa-ben-Merim, or Jesus, son of Mary.

The two chief sects of the Mohammedans are called Sunnites, or orthodox believers, and Chiites, who believe in the Koran, but refuse authority to the Caliphs, and do not recognise them as the Prophet's successors, and put no faith in the traditions which contain the acts and sayings of Mohammed. The Sunnites are principally to be found in Asia, also in Algeria and Tunis, while the doctrine of the Chiites is most prevalent in Persia. Until the beginning of the present century there were certain mosques at Tunis which had the privilege of offering refuge to criminals, and here the law had no power to arrest them, as in Paris and other places in the Middle Ages. Even a part of the public money appropriated to charitable pur-

poses was devoted to providing food and clothing for such fugitives. This custom was considered sacred and inviolable by the people; but Hahmouda Pacha, struck by the abuses which it entailed, found means of suppressing it by sending masons to the mosque with orders to wall up the doors and windows directly a criminal entered the building. They only left a small aperture, and soon the unfortunate man, pressed by hunger and thirst, himself begged to be taken before the Bey.

CHAPTER III.

Religious Sects and Observances—Pilgrimage to Mecca—Despotism of the Beys—Manner of Administering Justice—Anecdotes.

THE semi-religious confraternities in Tunis have always exercised much influence over the people, though professing not to interfere in secular affairs. Among these, the sect of the Aïssaouas is one of the most powerful, and was founded by Sidi Aïssa, of Mequinez, in Morocco. He was not a prince, like most of the founders of these orders, but, on the contrary, a poor man struggling to maintain a numerous family, and full of trust and faith in God. He went every day to prayer in the mosque, and returned in the evening to his miserable home. One day, when he was absent as usual, a man knocked at the door of his house, and calling the wife, gave her food for herself and her three children, saying, "Sidi Aïssa sends it to you." Next day, and the following days, this mysterious protector appeared, bringing regularly new provisions, so that everything abounded; and at last such favours and gifts were showered on them, that

it came to the Sultan's ears, who ordered Sidi Aïssa to leave the town. He obeyed, and established himself at a distance of some miles, in an uninhabited part of the country, taking with him his family and several disciples. He continued to prosper, and at last Muley Mohammed forbade him to remain there. Sidi Aïssa then proposed to buy up all the land in his dominion. The Sultan accepted the offer, considering it that of a madman, and thinking to rid himself of the marabout. They agreed as to the price, and a day was fixed for the execution of the treaty.

On the day appointed the Sultan left Mequinez, accompanied by the chief personages of the Court, that they might witness the discomfiture of the marabout. When they arrived at the trysting place, the Sultan seated himself at the foot of a huge olive tree. Muley Mohammed said—"Aïssa, I have come to give up the town of Mequinez and its environs to you. Here is the bill of sale; now give me the price agreed upon." "You shall receive it directly," said Aïssa. He then struck the olive tree, and a shower of gold pieces fell all around, which, when counted, amounted to three times the sum named. In the midst of a general

stupor Sidi Aïssa arose, and in a voice of thunder said to the Sultan, "I am the master of this place, of Mequinez, and its environs. In my turn, I banish you from my dominions." He, however, relented at the entreaty of those around him, and restored the empire to the Sultan, on condition that once a year, on the same day of the month, all the inhabitants, with the exception of his disciples, should be obliged to remain in their houses.

Since this period, three hundred years ago, this convention has been carried out, and proclamation is made in the town, previous to the twelfth of Mouloud, that all those not belonging to this confraternity shall remain within doors for seven days. It is true this edict does not affect any one, as all the inhabitants of Mequinez, without exception, belong to the sect of the Aïssaouas.

The most important seat of their power is naturally Mequinez, but the minor confraternities receive their instructions from Kairwān. The practices of this sect are so singular that I will give an account of one of their fêtes.

Once a year the Aïssaouas visit the tombs of their saints in the vicinity, preceded by men carrying banners richly ornamented, and a herald

bearing one with crescents. They slowly advance with measured steps, singing and reciting prayers and beating drums. When the tombs have been visited they repair to a building previously prepared for them, where in the inner courts carpets are spread, and all is brilliantly lighted up. A cushion marks the place of the Mokaddem, or President, of the fête. Many women are to be seen in the gallery of the first storey, closely veiled. The procession enters, forming a circle round the court, and the performers immediately begin to sing. At first the songs are grave and slow; then come the praises of Sidi Aïssa, the founder of the order. The performers gradually become more excited, the beating on the drums louder and quicker, a religious frenzy seizes them, and they break into wild shouts. Some of the fully initiated imitate the cries of wild animals, such as lions, bears, and jackals; and at last they walk on their knees and hands, making the most extravagant gestures and contortions. Pieces of glass are now freely distributed, which they grind between their teeth, and nails, which they force into their gums. Some swallow thistles and pieces of prickly pear; others place their tongues on a red-hot iron, or seize it in

their hands. One, bare-footed, jumps on a sabre, and at the sight of the blood flowing they become still more maddened; they call upon their father, the Mokaddem, for food, and he distributes living serpents, which they courageously put into their mouths. At last a living sheep is dragged into the midst of them, helpless, and bleating with terror; and these fanatics, transformed from men into beasts, tear it limb from limb, each eagerly seizing pieces of the quivering flesh and devouring it. The orgies wax still more horrible and furious, till, utterly exhausted by the violence of their emotions, they fall to the ground, and sink into a lethargic slumber. The Aïssaouas are very numerous in Tunis, and this fête takes place every year. The word Aïssaoua has become synonymous with juggler or wizard.

The Mohammedans have an iman or bishop, who is the first dignitary in the mosques, and the superior of the ulemas or priests. Then comes the marabout, whose mission is to see that the precepts of the Koran are duly observed. This title is never given to a Mussulman unless he has distinguished himself by his exemplary piety and pretended miracles. The dervishes are wandering monks, who live on the charity of the faithful; and the

men who guard the mosques are called mollahs. The emirs and sheriffs are high dignitaries, taken from the nobility; they are looked upon as descendants from the Prophet, and have much influence with the people. The guardian of the mosque ascends to the summit of the minaret five times a day, and, having hoisted a flag, calls the people to prayer, pronouncing these sentences: "Allah is great, O come to prayer, O come to adore; there is no other God besides Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet." The faithful then turn in the direction of Mecca, prostrate themselves on the ground without hesitation, and perform their devotions, whether they are even in the streets or the fields. Before entering a mosque they take off their slippers, and make the ablutions so strictly enjoined by the Prophet; and indeed, as is well known, a Mussulman, even when paying visits in the house of a superior, invariably leaves his slippers at the door.

Before entering on the subject of the pilgrimages, it is as well to state that the Mussulman year consists of twelve lunar months, and only 354 days. It begins again eleven days before our solar year, and dates from the Hedjira. The hours are counted

from sunset at six o'clock in the evening to the same hour next day. The Moslems have singular superstitions with regard to the months of the year. For instance, the first month, Mohurrem, is considered holy, and any warlike expedition is forbidden. In the second month, Safar, no Mohammedan will travel even now, except from dire necessity, as the saying is that no one who travels in that month ever returns. The tenth month, Choual, is especially devoted to visits and pleasurable meetings, and the eleventh, called Dhou-el-Kadar, is consecrated to the pilgrimage to Mecca. The pilgrims generally arrange to join the Rakeb or caravan of Mecca, which for centuries has always left Fez in Morocco on the second of Redjeb, the seventh month.

This caravan is commanded by a chief called "Cheikh-er-Rakeb," and is composed of pilgrims on foot, and men mounted on mules, horses, camels, and dromedaries; for it is not restricted to religious purposes only, but has also its commercial side, and such important business is often transacted, that, on reaching its destination, the caravan frequently numbers 8,000 persons. It is preceded by a man bearing a white standard, the pilgrims

marching to the sound of music, and singing the cry of Islam, "La Allah illa Allah" (There is no other God but Allah), or "El-Hamdoullah" (Glory to God). Three times a day the members of the caravan prostrate themselves with one accord to worship the Almighty, and the marabout reads prayers from the Koran.

The pilgrims carry couffins, or large flexible baskets, made of palm leaves plaited together, which contain their provisions of dates and roasted corn, also a skin on their heads containing water. They are mostly men accustomed to hard exercise, and can walk long distances; and, owing to their marvellous instinct and powers of observation, never lose their way, even when travelling alone, which, however, is rarely done, for isolated travellers would probably fall a prey to the numerous brigands who infest these regions, and who sometimes even venture to attack the Rakeb, notwithstanding its sacred character. A terrible conflict then takes place, for it is well known that, as a general rule, no prisoners are taken on either side, and each individual who falls into the power of his adversary is instantly put to death. There are, however, some exceptions. Marabouts, Jews, and

blacksmiths are allowed to escape; the first, from respect to their office, the second from contempt, and the third also for some unexplained reason, and it suffices for a man to make the movement of beating on the anvil to be allowed to pass unmolested. When the pilgrims arrive at Mecca, they hasten to prostrate themselves before Mahomet's tomb, and to offer up thanks for their preservation from the dangers of the route.

The wives of Moslems are sometimes allowed by their husbands to make short pilgrimages to the tombs of saints in the neighbourhood, but always under strict surveillance, and generally with their female friends. It is, however, generally believed that women have no souls, and therefore have no need of prayer. They are brought up in total ignorance, not knowing how to read or write, and spend their time mostly in embroidering with gold and silver on costly stuffs, or in domestic cares. Sometimes they are taken to spend a day in the country, but in carriages, where they are closely screened from view, and accompanied by several servants, who look well to see that the garden where they are to walk is not overlooked by any one of the masculine gender.

This monotonous existence is sometimes enlivened by the visits of almêhs, or dancing girls, and occasionally Jewesses come with articles for sale. The women never take their meals with their husband. He generally eats alone, or in company with one of his friends.

In former days, the Beys, as I have already said, exercised despotic power, and were the supreme judges of all cases whether civil or criminal, without any court of appeal. In Europe it would be hardly understood how one man could despatch so much necessary business with order and precision. But in this country the administration of affairs was very simple, and abuses were easily discovered, which would have passed unnoticed in a more complicated machinery of affairs. For example, if the Bey suspected that one of his agents robbed the treasury or his subjects, punishment was quickly inflicted in the most rigorous manner; and though the offender might be cunning enough to avoid open detection, the Bey never failed, by summary means, to make him restore what he imagined had been stolen, and this without the aid of the law.

The following fact, which is related by an eye-

witness, will show what injustice was frequently committed. The Bey's minister had a steward who was a Jew, in whom he had the utmost confidence. He had given into his charge at different times sums amounting to about £50,000, enjoining the greatest secrecy, and that no mention should be made of it in any of his accounts.

The minister died without having disposed of this sum, and the Jew could easily have appropriated the money, as no one knew anything about it: but perhaps fearing it might come to the ears of the Bey, or wishing to give a proof of his honesty, and so obtain some important post, he decided on making a declaration of the truth to his Highness.

The prince, far from being satisfied, felt that probably the Jew had kept back a portion of the treasure, and therefore did not cease to overwhelm him with repeated acts of oppression, thus hoping to force the poor Jew to restore the rest. His declaration, however, had been exact, and he was reduced to the greatest misery, being obliged to beg in the streets of Tunis.

The Bey was the sovereign judge, not only of important causes, but also of the smallest differ-

ences which arose among his subjects. Every day, at eight o'clock in the morning, he went to his audience-hall, where he remained till twelve o'clock, listening with admirable patience to the complaints and quarrels of his subjects, and giving his decision. He considered this one of the most important duties he owed to the people under his government, and seemed to take a pleasure in its performance. He also probably found his interest in it, as he never failed to inflict heavy fines on those who fell under his displeasure.

Everything was reduced to a very simple form. Each man pleaded his own cause without help, or any documents but those which attested the payment or the debt. The Bey, having heard the two parties, put some questions, and when he considered himself fully instructed as to the merits of the case, gave his irrevocable judgment. Sometimes, in a very difficult case, he took a day to consider, and to ask the opinion of lawyers, but generally his justice was summary, and a European tribunal would find it difficult to get through as many cases in a month as the Bey despatched in the course of a morning.

The habit of judging in this way sharpened

the intellect, and gave a keen insight into men's minds, which, with experience, compensated for the lack of instruction, as there was no previous study of jurisprudence.

I will note a few incidents, which will show the way in which justice was administered. A Moor had lost a purse containing several gold sequins. Desirous of recovering it, he instructed the public crier to proclaim his loss in the town. The purse had been found by a man who was well renowned for his honesty, and directly he knew who was the owner of it, he hastened to restore it. But the Moor, seeing he had to do with a rich man, thought it a favourable opportunity to gain something at the expense of the man who had so conscientiously restored the purse. He therefore maintained that eighty sequins were missing, and violently demanded their restitution. At last they both agreed to go before the Bey, when each related his story, and as apparently one was as probable as the other, it was no easy task to discover the culprit. The Bey asked to see the purse, and having examined it carefully, took out the few sequins it contained, and ordered another hundred coins to be brought from his treasury.

He then tried to put them into the purse which could only contain about fifty ; then emptying it again, he told its owner to try and put in the hundred sequins which he pretended it had contained. He not being able to succeed, the Bey called the man who had found the purse, and gave it to him, saying at the same time, "As this purse does not answer to the description given by your adversary, it belongs to you, and no one can dispute your possession of it. As to you," he said, turning to the discomfited Moor, "you deserve three or four hundred blows with a stick, but as you are thoroughly exposed as a dishonest man, go, and take care never to appear again before my tribunal."

Two Bedouins had found a cow which had strayed away in the night ; no one claimed her, but each of the two Bedouins wished to keep her. A complaint was brought before the Bey, who tried to make the two litigants decide the matter amicably, but not being able to succeed, ordered the cow to be brought before him, and addressed them thus : "All property which has no legal owner belongs to me ; therefore, according to this law, the cow does not belong to either of you, but to me. Let the owner of it come and ask for

it; he will be sure to receive a severe punishment for his carelessness in keeping his cattle. As for you, think yourselves happy to go out of my presence without being bastinadoed, for I strongly suspect you stole the cow yourselves."

It often happened that the bastinado was applied, not only to the guilty party, but to his accuser if he failed in substantiating his complaint; for the Moors have this proverb, "Beat the innocent to make the guilty confess," and the following anecdote will serve to show that this principle is sometimes put into execution.

A jewel-merchant at Tunis had just received from Constantinople ten beautiful rings mounted with rubies, emeralds, topazes, and other precious stones. He locked them up carefully in a box, which he placed in one of his cupboards. Next day, wishing to show these jewels to some of his rich customers, he found that one ring was missing, and that a topaz had disappeared. No stranger had entered the room where the precious box was placed, and it was evident that the theft could only have been committed by a person living in the house. The slaves, the servants, even the members of the family, were closely questioned,

and even searched, without the ring coming to light. The jeweller suspected an old servant who had been many years attached to his service, and being persuaded of his guilt, notwithstanding his reiterated assurances that he was innocent, ended by dragging him before the Bey's tribunal and accusing him of robbery. The unfortunate man wept bitterly, denying the accusation most solemnly on his oath. On the other side, the jeweller had no proof to bring, but only his suspicions, and the witness of his young daughter, aged twelve, who declared that she certainly had seen her father count the ten rings the evening before and shut them up in the box, and that the next day there were but nine.

Between such conflicting statements the Bey was much perplexed to find out the truth; at last he cried, "I order five hundred blows to be equally distributed between the two parties, alternately, fifty at a time. The executioner of this sentence began by administering fifty blows to the unfortunate servant, who persisted in proclaiming his innocence, and adjuring Mahomet and all the prophets to come to his aid. The next fifty blows were about to be dealt to the accuser. Already he

was seized by the slaves and thrown on his face; the stick was raised, when the young girl threw herself at the Bey's feet, and, imploring forgiveness, produced from her mouth the ring, which she had held there concealed, and which she had been tempted to steal the evening before from her father. It was impossible to undo the punishment suffered so unjustly by the poor servant; but the Bey gave him the ring as a compensation, and condemned the jeweller to receive the four hundred and fifty blows, since by his inconsiderate accusation he had exposed his servant to capital punishment. As the merchant was very rich, it is needless to say that he paid a heavy fine to free himself from this disgrace.

Murders were generally punished by death, with these differences in the way of administration: a Turk was strangled in the fort of the Citadel, a Moor was hanged in the very place where he had committed the crime. Even women condemned for murder shared this penalty.

They also in certain cases were condemned to be drowned; and a woman thus condemned was first obliged to pass through the streets on a donkey, with her face turned towards the tail. She was

then taken to the lake, put into a bag weighted with great stones, and thrown into the water ; but as the lake was very shallow there were men with long sticks to keep the bag in place till the unfortunate woman was dead. The jealousy of the Moors is well known, also how strictly their wives are guarded, but the following anecdote will serve to show the truth of the old proverb, "Where there's a will there's a way."

A Moor at Tunis had a pretty young wife, but an equally lovely widow who lived close by had fascinated him by her charms, and his visits to her house were very frequent. She, jealous of his wife, and determining to monopolise his heart, watched her rival very closely, and at last found out that a young and handsome merchant went to see her whenever her husband was absent. The delight of the widow was unbounded. She quickly revealed this intrigue to the husband, who, confident in the virtue of his wife, refused at first to believe what he considered a calumny, and only yielded to conviction on strong proofs of his wife's guilt being laid before him. One day, being apprised by the widow that the merchant had gone to see his wife, he hastened home to surprise them, but contrary to

his expectation she was alone, and though he searched well through the house no one was to be found. Disappointed, he went to relate this to the widow, who, after a moment's thought, said, "Did you look in your wife's great chest where she keeps her dresses and fine things?" "No, certainly not." "Then return at once, for there she has doubtless hidden her lover." Away went the husband, rushed up into his wife's room, and asked for the key of the chest. She refused to give it, and he only obtained it by using violence. The box was opened, and there lay the merchant hidden under dresses and shawls. The husband immediately shut down the lid, and locked up the box, shut up his wife in a closet near the room, and ran to make his complaint to the Bey. But while the indignant husband prepared to take his revenge, the faithless wife was not idle. By means of a little window in the closet she let herself down into the room, and with a duplicate key opened the box and let out the merchant, who went off as quickly as he could. When the Moor left his wife to carry his complaint to the chief of the police and to the Bey, he had not failed to tell the widow what had happened, and she, impatient to enjoy her triumph over her rival and

witness her humiliation, went to see her on pretence of consoling her, and of learning the details of what had taken place. To her surprise, she found her rival quite calm ; she did not seem to understand what her neighbour meant, and assured her nothing extraordinary had passed. "Do you mean to tell me," said the widow, "that your husband has not found your lover in this house?" "How could I have hidden him when there is not a safe corner in the house?" "But—in this box?" "Could a man get in there?" "Why not? I could hide myself there easily." "Impossible." "Well, see for yourself." And the widow quickly jumped in, and lay down in the box, but still more quickly was the lid shut down and locked securely.

The Moor's wife then returned to her little prison, by the same means which she had used to escape from it, and the husband arriving soon afterwards with the police officers suspected nothing, seeing everything was as he left it.

The chest was carried off by porters ; and the procession, dragging with them the accused wife, accompanied the husband to the tribunal of the Bey. The case was stated, and by his Highness's orders the chest was opened. But when the spec-

tators saw a woman slip out, dishevelled and ashamed, their surprise and hilarity knew no bounds, and the widow fled away without any explanation, pursued by hisses and shouts of laughter.

The Bey was exceedingly amused at the whole affair, but as he did not choose to have his court of justice turned into ridicule, he took the opportunity of enriching his treasure by inflicting a heavy fine on the Moor for making a false accusation. He, however, had seen the merchant in the box with his own eyes, and the widow also was determined to be revenged on the woman who had played her such a trick, and at last succeeded in substantiating her rival's infidelity.

The guilty couple again appeared before the Bey to hear their sentence pronounced. Death was the penalty of their crime: the man to be strangled, the woman to be drowned; but the Bey, remembering how the first scene had amused him, determined to be indulgent. The woman was transported to the island of Kerkanah, and the man received five hundred blows on the soles of the feet, followed by six months' hard labour, and the payment, as usual, of a heavy fine.

This island of Kerkanah is situated just opposite Sfax, on the eastern coast; it is the abode principally of fishermen and convicts. To these prisoners the Bey makes a daily allowance of bread, and as fish is abundant on this coast, they can easily obtain food. It often happens that the wives of rich persons are sent here solely on their husband's accusation of their having committed some great offence, without any hearing or judgment.

The climate of Tunis is considered very healthy, and certainly the air is very pure and light, notwithstanding the emanations from the lake, which are most unpleasant when the wind blows from the east. This inconvenience will be remedied when the project for making a port at Tunis is carried into execution. But I should be sorry to be an inhabitant of the town during this time, as the lake has received the drains of the town for centuries, and its disturbance must inevitably produce the usual results. When the sirocco blows, the temperature becomes very close, and must be stifling in the summer.

It was much colder during the months of December and January than we expected, and the

damp was most trying; indeed, it was the cause of my having a painful and wearisome attack of rheumatic sciatica, which lasted three or four months. These houses are made without chimneys, and the walls give out a great deal of damp from the habit prevalent here of making the mortar with sea water. The Arabs always use cushions, which are placed against the wall to avoid contact with it. They have little pottery stoves, which are easily carried about, and are heated with charcoal; and the Arabs place a sort of wooden coop over these for drying their clothes: a very necessary precaution, for what is laid aside at night feels very damp in the morning. At last we felt the cold so much that we ladies lived in shawls, and the gentlemen in great coats and red fezzes, a most becoming headgear.

The first rain falls in October, and generally ends in December; but towards the end of January we had some very stormy weather. The spring is very pleasant, and is the best time for making excursions to different places of interest in the neighbourhood. The summer sets in about the middle of May, and lasts for five months, which I am assured seems an eternity. It is then we shall

feel that "burning African sun" of which our friends write, but of which we have as yet had no experience. Snow is almost unknown here, but the mountains in the interior are often covered with it, though it soon disappears. The temperature is subject to sudden variations, which makes it trying for invalids, and the nights are very cold.

The disease most prevalent here is ophthalmia, which principally attacks the natives; it is caused by the ardent sun, by the particles of fine sand which the wind raises, and also by the damp in houses of the lower classes, as these are always built on the ground without cellars. Diphtheria is also common, principally among children, and often fatal. There is also a species of eczema, which is painful, and often attacks new-comers; but on applying certain remedies it quickly disappears.

We were well supplied during the winter with game; hares and partridges were plentiful, also woodcocks and various small birds, which Barthélemy cooked to perfection. He found some difficulty in dealing with the Arabs on first coming here, as they always ask three times as much as they intend to take, but he is now quite equal to coping with them, and caters famously for us. We

found the benefit of having brought him and his wife with us, as the servants here are very inferior, and require incessant surveillance, whereas this couple can be thoroughly trusted; and it was no small comfort to me during my illness, and my husband's frequent journeys to Susa, to feel that our friends were not neglected. Captain and Mrs. Dick took many country expeditions in the spring, and often returned laden with lovely wild flowers, such as cyclamen, sweet peas, mignonette, etc. Tunis now deserved its name of Verdant and Flowery, which we had considered so singularly inappropriate in the autumn.

During the early part of our residence here my husband and I received a most friendly invitation from Captain Tombarel to go to Mohammedia, where a detachment of the 4th Zouaves was encamped, and take déjeûner with him and his brother officers. Mohammedia is now a poor little village, and only the ruins of a once beautiful palace can now be seen. It was built by Sidi Ahmed forty years ago, and was his favourite resort. The interior was magnificently decorated, but according to the Tunisian custom, after the death of the Bey, it was abandoned, and the once-called Versailles of Tunis is now but

a most melancholy ruin, the resort of stray goats and camels. We left Tunis at 9 o'clock, with Madme. Tombarel and her friends, and drove to Mohammedia, where the captain's orderly met us, to show us the way to the camp. The road was exceedingly rough, and indeed, I may say, in some parts, there was no road at all, and the coachman exercised his own discretion in driving under the olive trees, so that we could pick clusters of the fruit, which was abundant. At last we arrived at the camp, where Captain Tombarel received us, and presented us to his brother officers.

We had a very pleasant merry déjeûner in one of the tents, and then witnessed some interesting military manœuvres; but the black clouds which began to rise up warned us to prepare for the homeward journey, which we luckily accomplished without rain.

Our next expedition was to the Bardo, in the company of Dr. and Madame Chauvain. The Bardo is not only a palace, it is more like a little fortified town, surrounded by a wall with towers and bastions. It contains a bazaar, kept by Moslems, Jews, and Christians, a mint, and the State prisons, as well as vast grounds situated beyond the fortified

building. It is about three miles from Tunis; the road is good, and was much frequented when it was the residence of the late Bey, as, besides the usual traffic of the road, the high functionaries of the Court, and visitors of all classes, were in constant communication with his Highness. Many of the equipages were drawn by three mules, with harness beautifully embroidered, others were simpler. Sometimes the red and gold carriage of the Bey was to be seen with its painted panels, and its magnificent embroidered silk fittings inside. Eight mules drew this carriage, the coachman's livery being light blue cloth ornamented with silver. All along the length of the road, where there was the least shade, might be seen groups of poor natives indolently reclining on the ground, wrapped up in coarse coverings, some asleep, and some basking in the heat of the sun, but all more or less in picturesque attitudes. The indescribable mixture of costumes of different colours, the amalgamation of men and women, of rich and poor, of luxury and misery, of dirt and cleanliness, of horses, donkeys, mules, and camels, form a picture which must be seen to be realised, and which, when seen, cannot fail to fascinate every one.

But I am digressing, and must return to our

drive. We passed by a vast aqueduct, which had been built by the Spaniards, and which is still perfect in many parts, and soon arrived at the Bardo with its imposing looking fortifications on either side. In front of the building is a platform, guarded by a few soldiers. Facing the entrance door are two elevations, one with a fountain for the refreshment of horses, and the other destined for the execution of those condemned to death by the sabres of the Moors. After passing through a spacious court remarkable for its splendid dome and arches of Arab architecture, we ascended the celebrated flight of marble steps called "The Staircase of Lions;" there are three on each side in most valuable white marble. It was very necessary to have a guide before arriving here, as the courts and vestibules are endless. We were much struck by the varieties of coloured marble round the doors, and the stripes of black and white marble round the arches are very handsome; the walls are covered with earthenware tiles arranged in elaborate patterns. We passed by the palace of the Chief Minister, and through the court of the harem, where black eunuchs were quietly smoking their cigars; and this brought us to the Staircase of the Lions, which led

to the palace inhabited by his Highness. We passed through a vast reception hall with a fountain in alabaster; this hall formerly used to be crowded with courtiers and officers, Tunisian subjects, strangers in quest of novel impressions, and a prodigious number of Arabs more or less clothed, sleeping under the arches or lazily surveying what was passing around, We visited the Hall of Justice, with its fine ceiling of gilt and red arabesques, where the Bey used to dispense his summary judgments, and then passed into the different apartments. There is an admirable picture of Louis Philippe in Gobelin tapestry, and there are also portraits of the sovereigns of Europe, of the Princes of Tunis, and the portrait of the Bey.

On a later occasion we again visited the Bardo, with an order to see the private apartments, and the room where Sidi Mohammed-es-Saddok, the brother of the actual Bey, died. The gardens are vast, but not well kept. We noticed some very fine orange trees, but not equal to those at Manouba, the ancient palace of Hamouda Pacha, now transformed into a barrack for the French soldiers. There we saw groves of orange trees of immense size, loaded with fruit and lovely flowers.

Manouba took its name from Lalla (or Madame) Manouba, a saint held in great veneration by the Mussulmans.

There is something very sad to me in the way that these beautiful palaces are allowed to fall into ruin. No Bey ever occupies the palace of his predecessor; it would be considered fatal to his prosperity, and that the "Aïn," or Evil Eye, would haunt him; and this principle is general among their subjects as well. Thus, if a house has been shaken by an earthquake, or partially destroyed by fire or any other accident, they never repair it, but prefer to build another house, and use the materials of the old one. Their building is very slight, and the houses seldom have more than one storey, so that rebuilding is not such a serious matter as it would be in Europe; but this custom gives that ruinous look to the town which struck me so much on my arrival, and to which I have before alluded.

My favourite resort is the Arab quarter of Tunis, which is generally clean and well kept. I am never tired of walking in the narrow, zigzag streets, and looking at their small windows, so jealously guarded from prying eyes by cages of

lattice-work, and then at the large Moorish doors, with their framework of black and white marble, and the small inner door with its primitive round knocker, studded with nails arranged in crescents, and its emblems to ward off the power of the Evil Eye; and now and then, in quite a common-looking house, you suddenly come across a beautiful column in marble, evidently brought there from some ruined palace. Everything is strange and interesting, and all the surroundings are so thoroughly Oriental. There are the grave Moors, tall and erect, with regular features and fair complexions, in their picturesque, lovely-coloured gandouras, and white bernouses gracefully draped on their symmetrical figures, which are surmounted by the orthodox turbans; women all shrouded in white, with black crape over their faces, gliding past in the quiet streets; then you turn round a corner, and find yourself in the midst of a busy crowd, pushing and jostling their way, holding up some article for sale, and screaming out its merits; wonderful figures on donkeys, with their straw hats gaily trimmed and as large as umbrellas; negresses in their red striped petticoats, and large necklaces, bracelets, and anklets; Jews in their blue

and grey cloth garments, and red fezzes with blue tassels; Jewesses in their very peculiar tight-fitting dress, and headgear like helmets; country people strangely tattooed; and a sprinkling of Europeans; all this is more amusing than I can describe.

We long to go into the mosques, which look so beautiful; but in Tunis the entrance is strictly forbidden to strangers of either sex. When we visit Kairwān we shall be allowed to see them, for though for a thousand years no Christian ever visited this, *the* Holy City of Africa, which was "the hotbed of all the bigotry of Mohammedanism in Africa," yet, since its desecration by the French troops in 1881, any one may visit its mosques, of which there are five hundred.

Our visits to the Souk for perfumery were frequent, and I made friends with one of the Moors, who sold attar of roses, Schnooda, and other delightful perfumes. Whenever I passed he called loudly, "Viens, madame, viens," as they always speak in the second person; and even if I did not buy any thing, he always asked for my handkerchief, and perfumed it with attar of roses.

These Moors all exercise some trade; and though exceedingly proud, think it no disgrace to

retail perfumery, silks, and even groceries. This Souk is covered above with large planks of wood, which do good service in protecting from rain, or the too ardent rays of the sun. Each vendor sits in his own little niche; but it is the fashion to meet two or three together, and discuss the events and politics of the day, and read the papers.

They look on the Bey as a traitor to the Sultan, and anathematise the French invaders under their breath. The Moors have a quick sense of humour, and are able at an emergency to indulge in a keenly-pointed repartee. The report of the procès Roustan-Rochefort, translated into classical Arabic, has afforded them unceasing amusement, but their excessive mirth over the adventures of the French minister and his friends led them into indiscretion. Their proceedings reached the ears of General Japy, who summoned one of the most venerable members of the ancient confraternity of Moorish scent-sellers to appear before him. "You are always talking against the French," said the General, "and you must be punished." The luckless Moslem in vain protested the contrary. The General informed him that he was sentenced to lose his tongue. The instruments

essential to the operation were then produced on a tray. Then, and then only, did the Moor forget his dignity. Forgetting his ancestors of Granada and Cordova, he embraced with fervid eagerness the feet of his judge. I need hardly say he was pardoned, and that General Japy was only indulging his sense of humour, and at the same time giving the offender a lesson in prudence. The incident, however, will become a tradition of the Souk-el-Attarin, and will not be forgotten when the good time does arrive.

I have said nothing about my Arab friends for a long time. Owing to my illness, I had been unable to go and see them, and they could not of course come and see me, as they never pay any visits. But one day I went, and found Aunt Lashusha, Halouma, and Fatima all busy working at their frames, embroidering in silver; there were also two or three retainers, whose wages amount to about five francs a month, which is the reason, no doubt, of their scanty clothing, which consisted of a striped petticoat, and camisole.

I seated myself on a cushion, and presently in came a very old woman, who seemed very angry at seeing me there, and pointing to me,

began to vociferate in Arabic. Not to be outdone, I answered with a volley of French, upon which her horror knew no bounds, and she began to make passes at me, and to murmur incantations. I told her, in what Arabic I could muster, that I was one of the good genii; and Fatima, who is always as mischievous as she is pretty, told her a great deal about me which I could not understand, but they all laughed till they cried. She at last dared to approach me, and make me take off my bonnet, to see if it grew there, I suppose, but I kept a watchful eye over all her movements, as I knew she probably would cut a piece out of my dress, this being a sovereign remedy against the effects of the Evil Eye, or "Aïn," and I chanced to know it.

I happened to call upon Lalla Fatima one day rather late, and found her at dinner with an old woman. On her inviting me to join them, I accepted the invitation, and set myself down on a small stool before a very low table. The appointments thereof were most primitive, knives and forks being dispensed with, and each took what she liked out of a large dish. Fatima handed me a piece of a fish, and an olive, which I ate; and after she had given me a piece of highly-seasoned

meat, the repast was over, and she led me to a small basin of scented water, and washed my hands, drying them with one of the fashionable etamine chair-backs, which, it seems, are to be bought much cheaper in London than here. It was a very funny experience, but not one I should care to repeat.

My friends kindly sent me one of their favourite dishes, kouskousou, for us to taste. It consisted of chicken and mutton with quantities of semola, and was very highly spiced. We did not care much for it.

One day M. T—— L——, the brother of my friends, came to dine with us, and, seeing that he seemed to appreciate our plum pudding, I sent them one, which they declared they liked very much. M. L—— dresses in European style, which disappointed us, for, as you will have already observed, we are all bitten with an Arab mania. He kindly proposed taking us to see the Dar-el-Bey, which was the town residence of the Beys of Tunis; so we all went, and were much gratified.

This palace was built by the Bey Hamouda, and is the finest type to be seen of princely Moorish style. The court is paved in white marble, and

all round are black and white marble arcades, supported by sixteen marble columns. The ceilings of the porticoes are covered with coloured flowers, mixed with gold. Below are arabesques wonderfully traced, as delicate as lace embroidery, and much resembling those of the Alhambra. The reception rooms are spacious, and we were told they were splendidly furnished some years ago, but all that was beautiful has long ago disappeared, and only very ordinary furniture remains. Some of the ceilings are lovely, with the same delicate arabesques, particularly that in one octagon room, and the salon of the Bey is almost entirely in crystal, so that he could see all that passed without being seen himself.

It had been the custom from time immemorial for the Beys to spend the month of Ramadân in the town residence, and when Mohammed-es-Saddok had to surrender it as a dwelling for General Lambert and his suite, the old man wept and refused to be comforted. Here three of our own royal princes had been received, and many other royalties; but that was a thing of the past. We went on the terrace on the roof of the house, and enjoyed the fine view of the town and environs. We saw Go-

letta, the ruins of Carthage, and the chapel of St. Louis, Rhades, a village prettily situated on an eminence, and the hill called Sidi Bil Hassan.

A fortress crowns its summit, and beyond is a sanctuary where frequent pilgrimages are made on Fridays by ladies who are childless, as the popular belief is that by sliding down a stony declivity on the other side and invoking the aid of Allah, their wishes will be realised. The other hill which dominates Tunis is called the Belvedere; it is to the north of the city, and a camp has been made there by the French, and strongly fortified.

When we first came here the grapes were abundant, and most delicious. They were brought from the country by little donkeys in large panniers, but were often much crushed, and nothing could be more disagreeable than to see them in the native shops covered with flies; thus we took care to secure them early in the market. The pomegranates were remarkably fine, and much sweeter than those at Cannes; but I was sadly disappointed at not finding bananas, as I had been told they were plentiful, and it is very true that in the public gardens there are groves of banana trees with immense clusters of fruit, but it is a mystery who eats them, as they are

not for sale. Of course, if the inhabitants would cultivate them, it would be easy enough to get them, for the soil has lost none of its old reputation for fertility. The vegetables are good, but dear; it is a sight to see the enormous loads of long radishes brought on the donkies' backs. The Arabs are very fond of them, and eat quantities with their highly-spiced food. The cauliflowers were splendid, and great cartsful came in from the country. In due season we had spinach, carrots, turnips, peas, beans, artichokes, and wild asparagus, much larger than those found on the Île St. Honorat, but not so good. The oranges are the best I ever tasted, so sweet and luscious, and with a peculiar flavour which the natives call muscat; and now, in the month of May, we have Japanese medlars, strawberries, and apricots.

The dates, as is well known, quite failed last season; but in November, when Captain and Mrs. Dick arrived, nothing could be more delicious than those we had during their short apparition. Never had we eaten such dates! So we resolved that our friends at Cannes should also enjoy them. We were informed that the camels were on their way from the desert laden with this fruit, and the day

for their arrival was announced at Tunis. I accordingly sent a shower of post-cards to Cannes, and informed my friends that the dates would be *en depôt* at a small shop in the Rue d'Antibes belonging to M. Courrin, who had obligingly placed it at my disposal for their reception.

Accordingly, on the appointed day, a procession of carriages arrived with empty baskets, and M. Courrin was besieged by requests for dates, which, alas! had not arrived. The neighbours, astonished at the sight of so many fine equipages day after day before a small shop devoted to the sale of oil and soap, and hitherto "unknown to fame," imagined that M. Courrin's fortune was made, and their curiosity was keenly aroused. But the excitement soon passed away for want of fuel to feed the flame, and the disappointment about the dates was very great, as many people had told me how much they wished to have them. Meanwhile, our anxiety here, and impatience at Tunis, knew no bounds, and can be but faintly imagined. Captain Dick spent most of his time in sallying out and wading about the town, which was a lake of mud, from the heavy rain which continued to fall with but little intermission; and as there are no outlets in the streets for the water,

people were obliged to wear high boots and paddle about as they could. As for the omnibuses, it was a service of danger, for they fell from one great hole in our street into another, and rocked violently to and fro, with their precious burdens of turbaned Moslems, who, however, remained impassible, and trusted to fate, whilst the mud formed itself into waves, and threatened to submerge the cumbersome vehicles.

What added to our annoyance was the constant appearance of scouts with the cheering intelligence of the advance of the camels, who could come on but slowly from the swampy state of the country, and from being so heavily weighted. As there was a camel-market just opposite our house we thought of organising a camel corps as a forlorn hope, and going to the rescue of these long-suffering animals. At last one day Captain Dick came in and said this time they really were coming, and that we had better have the déjeûner an hour earlier to be ready to receive the dates. This we did (we would willingly have gone without any to be sure of the dates). Captain Dick took a carriage and went forth to meet them, and Mrs. Dick and I spread a large sheet in a corner of the patio, put on our aprons, and sat on the stool of expectation.

But alas! again were we doomed to be disappointed; the melancholy fact that the date harvest had completely failed was forced upon our unwilling minds, and we at last ceased to call "Sister Anne, Sister Anne." The few that arrived were crushed, and unfit for exportation. Determined, however, not to be crushed myself, I recalled the brilliant feats of Madame Rödel, of Bordeaux, and resolved to follow her example. Her history is not generally known, but it is most interesting.

This poor lady, many years ago, had a fearful attack of small-pox, and was at death's door, but recovered, contrary to the expectation of every one, though with the loss of her beauty. She was so *émue* by her husband's unswerving devotion, notwithstanding her disfigurement, that she resolved on making his fortune. She accordingly, after much perseverance, succeeded in producing the famous conserves which have a world-wide reputation for their unsurpassed excellence, and which caused wealth to flow into her husband's coffers. My plan was to utilise the crushed dates, and I directed Barthélemy to make them into marmalade, which we all thought so delicious that I had a large quantity made and put into tin pots, which were

soldered up, packed into a wooden case, made by a Cannes carpenter, and despatched to Goletta, to be sent to the care of M. Courrin.

But "days and weeks passed away," and still no tidings came of our precious merchandise. "Misfortune had clearly marked me for her own," and the case, from some unexplained cause, did not arrive at Cannes for weeks after leaving Tunis. When it was opened it was found that one or two pots had burst, but it was hoped that this was only an accident, and the pots were neatly arranged on shelves for the customers, who again kindly flocked to purchase them.

But whether it was owing to the change of climate, and tossing about so long, or that evil genii were imprisoned in them, the inmates of the shop were much frightened at seeing the pots suddenly bound from their places and knock against the opposite wall, throwing a large parrot off his perch, and scattering the sticky contents in every direction. Of course, this catastrophe was preceded by a loud report, which made the neighbours run in to see what was the matter, and suggestions of dynamite were heard on every side. And thus ignobly ended my first commercial venture. What vexed

me most was the trouble and disappointment I had unwittingly caused to all our kind friends.

The best dates are found in the Djerid, to the south of the Regency, better known as the Sahara. There are several qualities of this fruit. The Digla dates are much superior to the others, and they are exported to Europe in January and February; a sort of paste is made of the inferior sorts, which is sent to Malta for the lower classes, and also for horses. The camels and mules eat it here, mixed with barley or grass.

We have ample opportunity of studying the habits of these animals, for, as I said before, the camel-market is exactly opposite our windows, and most amusing it is to us to watch these interesting creatures. They always lie down to feed, and in the winter their food principally consists of bran, which is given to them in large sieves; two or three eat together, and allow only their own little donkey to join them, for their driver is always mounted on a little bourrico, as they call them. These little donkeys are most spirited and useful; they never seem tired, and carry immense loads. The market is now covered with fresh grass, which is brought in from the country every morning, mixed with

quantities of yellow daisies, which the camels appreciate greatly.

The first time I ordered a load of coal, I was much surprised to see it arrive on the back of a camel. The creature let himself down on his front legs, and lay before the door, looking like a great brown heap, till he was relieved of his load, when he rose up, seeming interminable as he did so, and walked back alone into the market. These animals are wonderfully useful. Besides their precious services as beasts of burden, and their powers of passing days without food or water, their hair is used for carpets, cords, certain materials for dresses, etc. Now is the time for clipping them, and afterwards they are rubbed over with pitch, to avoid the irritation which would throw out an eruption. Camels' milk is also much appreciated. Even in death these animals are precious, for the skin, flesh, and fat are all utilised.

There are certain tribes in the interior who bestow great care on their dromedaries, which of course are superior to the camels, and more valuable. The price of a good camel is about £8, while a dromedary would fetch about £40 or £50 sterling. When the young ones are born they are

immediately buried in the sand up to their necks, that their delicate legs may not be deformed by the weight of their bodies. In this position they remain for a fortnight, and their only food is butter; afterwards their education begins. They learn to stop, and to stoop when required, and to obey orders at once. The mules are very fine here, and they are often used in preference to horses, as being so much stronger, and so sure-footed. Their value is greater than that of horses.

When we first thought of coming here, I must say one of my objections was the quantity of disagreeable insects I expected to find in such a hot country. But this idea was quite erroneous, I am happy to say. Though we arrived in September, when, at Cannes, we should have been tormented with flies and mosquitoes, and Perrita with fleas, here we had none, or very few. They seem to confine themselves to the Arabs—and long may they continue to do so!

We were told that scorpions were very commonly seen, and in the old houses I hear this is the case. In an old work on Tunis, I read that at night men used to go round the town with lanterns and

long-handled brooms to sweep them off the walls. The serpents are mostly harmless, and in many Moorish houses they keep one for good luck. So far is this feeling carried that the serpent's dinner is prepared, and the creature glides into the room at meal-times, devours its portion, and retires again into its hole. At certain periods of the year the serpent charmers ply a thriving trade, for the Arabs are never tired of admiring the tricks by which these jugglers excite the serpents to bite their noses or tongues; and the spectators are always taken in, though it is well known that the teeth which contain the venom have been extracted, and that they are therefore harmless. Captain Dick found one in the street one day. No doubt it had escaped out of the bag in which the charmers carry them. He killed it by a blow with his stick.

And now the time when these dear friends were to leave Tunis approached but too quickly, and on the 26th of April they went by the steamer to Palermo, and left a sad blank; but the news of their safe arrival has reached us, and we must look forward to meeting again.

CHAPTER IV.

Precious Stones—Mineral Springs—Origin of Baths—Visit to Carthage—Physicians—Polygamy—Perfumery—Native Races.

I HAVE before mentioned the great value set upon jewels by the Arabs, and one of their authors, Terfachey, whose manuscript is preserved in the National Library, has written a work on the subject, which is interesting. According to him rubies strengthen the action of the heart, keep off thunder and the plague, and appease thirst. The emerald cures the bite of scorpions, or of any other venomous reptiles, and blinds them if placed before their eyes ; it drives away demons and evil spirits, and is a specific against epilepsy and diseases of the eyes. The diamond has also the power of curing epilepsy and other diseases. The turquoise strengthens the sight, and cures ophthalmia. The bloodstone must be presented to people in a passion, when it exercises such a soothing influence that their anger evaporates instantly. It also stops hemorrhage, and cures the toothache, preserves from bad luck, and is a pledge of happiness and long life. The cat's eye nullifies the

power of the Evil Eye, and in battle renders its wearer invisible to his antagonist. The topaz is a specific remedy against jaundice and bilious affections; and, finally, women who are nursing wear a turquoise ring to ensure having abundance of milk.

These precious stones are often engraved with mystical characters, generally the work of a Marabout, and are sold by him at a high price as "telsem," or talismans, as are also pieces of parchment, called amulets, on which are written the ninety-nine names of the Almighty, each signifying a particular virtue. The Mussulmans often carry chaplets consisting of ninety-nine beads with these names engraved, which they repeat aloud when they are performing their devotions; they believe that the hundredth name has been hidden, but he to whom it will be revealed will be endowed with universal power, and with the gift of performing miracles, and will be the sovereign master of the universe, commanding even the genii, the angels, and other celestial beings. According to their creed this name has only been revealed to Adam, to Solomon, and to Mahomet.

The belief in the Evil Eye is universal among this people, and even the Arab doctors share this prejudice, and believe that ophthalmia is entirely due to this influence, and that it suffices for one man to look unkindly on another, to produce this illness. The only remedy employed by them against it is a little piece of red cloth, suspended by a thread before the pupil of the eye to attract the bad influence from the patient, and so counteract the evil. I may here observe that we learn both from Pliny and Virgil that the ancient Greeks and Romans believed in the influence of the Evil Eye, and also that exaggerated praise brought misfortune on its object.

The "Aïn" is also accused as being the cause of all the evil which happens. If a European caresses their children, or seems to take pleasure in praising, or looking at them, the parents hasten to take them away. If a fine horse is admired before the owner, he considers it predestined to misfortune in some shape, either by illness or accident. I myself saw the aunt of my Arab friends place before her a little servant girl, suffering from ophthalmia, mutter some incantations, and make cabalistic signs; she finally put her

finger down her own throat, and then placed it on the child's eyes, and under her chin, firmly believing this to be an effectual remedy; but I saw poor little Assiza some days afterwards with her eyes in a wretched condition, which made me doubt the efficacy of Lalla Lashusha's remedies. This same little creature made a snatch at Mrs. Dick's handsome card-case, as we were leaving the house, to our great astonishment, which showed she required some moral training; but this is utterly wanting, of course. Our gravity, too, was sadly tried that day, for Lalla Lashusha proceeded at a certain hour to perform her devotions, standing up and reciting verses from the Koran, and then prostrating herself till her forehead touched the ground, without losing her balance. The sight of a very stout, middle-aged woman, in tight white trousers, and a wide blue silk vest, and with a little black helmet on her head, engaged in these gymnastics was not to be forgotten. Mrs. Dick and I tried to do the like, but it was a signal failure.

On one occasion I was calling with some ladies at an Arab house, where we were very kindly received, and coffee was handed round; but we observed the Arab ladies whispering together,

and seemingly annoyed at something. On asking a young daughter of the Arab lady, who spoke a little French, what was the matter, she hesitated, and coloured up, and after much persuasion confessed that they were all very much shocked to see that one of our party wore a cameo brooch representing a nude figure of Venus, and added that no Arab lady would think of doing such a thing! We were much surprised, and the lady with the brooch was rather vexed, but I thought the Arab lady was right. To make us forget the little contretemps, they showed us the contents of their wardrobe, and unfolded vests, and jackets, and trousers, in velvet and satin, embroidered with gold, each one more gorgeous than the other.

There are in Tunisia numerous mineral springs, but the two principal ones are Hamman-el-Lif, and Hamman Gourbos. We visited the former one afternoon by train, as a line of railway has been made thus far, which will ultimately extend to Susa, Sfax, and Gabés, on the eastern coast. Hamman-el-Lif was celebrated in the time of the Romans, who established thermes here, the ruins of which still remain. The name is taken from an Arab word signifying "baths on the promontory."

They are prettily situated at the foot of a mountain with two peaks like horns; still further to the south are mountains containing rich treasures of lead, and forming the last spurs of the chain of the Atlas mountains. We visited the establishment of the baths, and nothing can be more wretched than their arrangements. The large patio had a storey above with a gallery, and here were several Jewish families, who take rooms and use these baths. The inhabitants of Tunis, and indeed of all the coasts of Africa, from time immemorial, have frequented them, and especially after the month of Ramadân towards the end of June, when they resort in great numbers to these waters, which contain a large quantity of sulphur and carbonate of lime, and are slightly impregnated with iron, and of a temperature of 60° centigrade.

The other spring, Hamman Gourbos, near the little town of Gourbos (the ancient Carpis), mentioned by Titus Livius under the head of Aquæ Calidæ, contains aluminium, and if silver is dipped into this water and rubbed it becomes beautifully bright. It is considered very strengthening, and the degree of heat is more intense than that of Hamman-el-Lif.

Dr. Frank speaks of his visit to this spring in 1862, which took place under difficulties, as a Moorish saint was buried here. An oratory was erected to his memory, close to the mineral waters, and no infidel foot had been allowed to tread the sacred soil. The Mussulmans murmured loudly, and endeavoured to prevent Dr. Frank's entrance, but the Jewish interpreter who accompanied him loudly proclaimed that he was the chief Hakim, or physician of the Bey, and was sent by him to test the properties of the water. He was then quickly surrounded by a crowd eager to consult him, and every facility was given him to make a careful examination of the water.

The use of warm baths is well known to be general among all Oriental nations, and I must reproduce an amusing legend on the origin of them, thus related by an Arab :—"King Solomon, who was renowned for his wisdom and foresight, had ordered warm baths to be constructed for the health and cleanliness of the human race throughout the terrestrial globe. He had placed genii, real genii, to wait upon those who came to the baths. But, in order that they should neither hear, repeat, nor see what was said or done in these numerous establish-

ments, he had ordained that the genii in question should be blind, deaf, and dumb. Why did he take this precaution? Doubtless, because things occurred in the baths of King Solomon which were to be eternally covered with the veil of mystery. Evidently, discretion was one of the virtues of this sovereign. But at last Solomon, in a common, vulgar way, died, like any other mortal, and when it became necessary to explain to the genii that their master was no more, it was impossible to make them understand, consequently the triply infirm genii continued to warm the baths as if nothing had happened, and to this day they continue to do so with as much zeal as ever!" Now, do you understand the origin of thermal sources? One must acknowledge that, at all events, if this version be not strictly veracious, it is *ben trovato*.

The water which supplies Tunis is excellent, and is conducted from Zaghouan by means of a superb aqueduct, constructed by French engineers, who utilised a part of the ancient aqueduct of Carthage. The town of Zaghouan contains about 3,000 inhabitants, and is built on the side of a high mountain, which supplies numerous and abundant springs. The distance from Tunis is about twenty-

five miles, the position beautiful, the town being surrounded by gardens and magnificent forests, with abundance of olive trees.

The principal gate, which is gigantic, is ornamented by a fine ram's head with a pair of huge twisted horns, and below is the Latin word, "Auxilio." It was built by the Romans, who often placed this inscription on gates intended to facilitate the bringing in of supplies during a siege, or to procure easy egress in case of necessity. The ram's head, which was the emblem of Jupiter Ammon, is frequently to be seen on medals, and probably was placed on this gate to invoke the aid of this god for the safe conduct of the pilgrims who passed through to visit his temple. Zaghouan is considered the healthiest place in the whole Regency. The air is pure and light, and the temperature less variable than that of Tunis, though colder in winter from the proximity of the chain of mountains to the north east; water, too, flows in abundance on every side, so that the gardens are productive, and trees give a delightful shelter from the heat.

We had long wished exceedingly to visit the ruins of Carthage, but my illness had prevented our doing so. However, at last I was able to go with

my husband, and we took the two servants with us, and Perrita. The day was lovely, and we thoroughly enjoyed our drive of fourteen miles. We arrived at the foot of the eminence on which the chapel and college of St. Louis are built, and slowly ascending the steep road, were delighted with the grand view from the summit of the hill, which overlooked that sea once covered with the ships of a powerful fleet. Here, in former days, stood the fortress of Byrsa, and the temple of Æsculapius. From a distance the chapel looks well, but it disappointed us on closer inspection. It contains a statue of St. Louis, by Emil Scarre, and some arabesques on the upper part of the wall; the windows are of coloured glass, with the monograms of Louis the Ninth and Louis Philippe. The exterior is of Gothic architecture. The cost of building was so great that the question was asked whether the walls had been built of mortar mixed with champagne instead of water. A pretty garden surrounds the chapel. The chaplain and concierge have made numerous researches in the ruins below, and have discovered some antiquities, which are placed in a museum behind the chapel forming part of the college. A beautiful mosaic slab was lately discovered by the Père Délattre, near the

railroad; it is in the museum, together with many antiquities excavated by the learned antiquaries who from time to time have made important discoveries; and no doubt many others will be made, for it seems impossible that the ruins of Carthage can yet have divulged all its secrets.

As all my readers know, Carthage was founded by Dido, but perhaps some, like myself, may not be aware that this was the name by which she was poetised by Virgil, and that her real name was Elissa, the granddaughter of Eshbaal, king of the Sidonians, who, as we are told in the Bible, was the father of the famous Queen Jezebel, and consequently Elissa was her niece. This seems hard of belief, though wherefore I cannot tell, for it is probable Jezebel had nieces like other people, and she certainly was not a fabulous personage. The remains of a temple dedicated to the worship of Baal was found at Carthage, and the account of Hanno's expedition to found colonies on the Lybian coast is engraved there. This memorial was carried off and preserved by a Sicilian traveller.

After the arrival of the Phœnician princess, a close bond of union existed between the new colony and the Tyrians, which continued for cen-

turies. They aided each other in all emergencies, and exchanged rich presents annually, and when Tyre was invaded by Alexander the Great, the women and children were sent to Carthage. A gentleman living at Tunis informed me that he had in his possession an image of the god Buddha, which doubtless had been brought from India by the Phœnicians. It was found among the ruins, and is perfect, except the head, and this is to be explained, as the Arabs invariably decapitated any statues or gods which were unknown to them. No doubt this was done at the time of the Arab invasion of Carthage and Tunis, and will account for the number of headless statues found.

It seemed wonderful to be standing on such classical ground, so rich in interesting associations, and to see the poor vestiges of this wealthy and extensive city once so renowned as the successful rival of Rome, and the cradle of the heroes who have made her name illustrious. I should like to have remained for hours, but time was fleeting apace, and we descended the hill to visit the cisterns, which are eighteen in number, and are some of them in good preservation and half full of water. Here we met Arabs who were bent on

selling us stones and medals, which we rejected, as of doubtful origin. The joy of the servants was great on finding three teeth in a rubbish hole, which they declared must have belonged to the ancient Romans, till Marius told them they were evidently those of a donkey or mule. At last we tore ourselves away, and drove home by Marsa, which once formed part of Carthage. Here is the country residence of the English Consul, also of the French Minister, and the present Bey has a palace here; the gardens are exceedingly pretty, and there are plenty of villas, which are taken by people for the summer.

The Moors have great faith in doctors, and take every opportunity of consulting them, which often makes them the dupe of any charlatan they happen to meet; they have a proverb, "never injure priests or doctors under any circumstances, whatever may be their faith or nationality." The following anecdote, showing their credulity, is related by a traveller.

"One day one of our Moorish friends complained of a violent pain in his head, and brought forward many learned reasons to prove that it was caused from having eaten an old hen, on which a Jew had

cast a spell. On going to consult a barber (who is a very important person, and often acts as a doctor), he, by still more scientific reasoning, declared that cupping on the neck and extracting a tooth were the best remedies to be employed. The Moor seated himself in the large leathern arm-chair, and said, with stoical composure, "set to work at once and cure me. The barber, armed with a pair of pincers with unequal prongs, soon pulled out the tooth, which was perfectly sound, but in doing this, broke two others. "Do you feel relieved?" said this quack to his unfortunate patient, preparing to cup him at the same time, which operation was performed very superficially. "Yes," gravely replied the Moor, "I am better, and I have no longer pain in my head."

The barber is not the only disciple of Æsculapius who practises in these countries; there is the Thebib, or infallible doctor, and the Mdaouï, or simple healer; the Marabouts also pretend to cure their clients, but by means only of conjuring sentences, for the veneration which they inspire enables them to dispense with other remedies, and should the illness impertinently refuse to yield to these adjurations, it is never the fault of the Mara-

bout, but evidently he is not that special one ordained by Allah to put the evil spirit to flight. The Sœurs de Charité, who are as devoted at Tunis as elsewhere, are called Marabouta by the Arabs. The Thebib has very little medical instruction, indeed it is considered a hereditary talent, and is supposed to be transmitted from father to son! The Thebibs have a little general knowledge of physiology, of the circulation of the blood, and of a few simple remedies for prevalent diseases; experience, and various subterfuges which succeed in this country of credulous people, supply the rest. They sometimes prescribe impossible remedies to their patients, such as to drink the milk of a lioness, or to bathe in a certain river but with special injunctions to follow it to its source. It can easily be imagined that before the lioness has consented to be milked, the patient may die, and yet no one can accuse the Thebib of having employed a wrong remedy! The Mdaouï are very inoffensive, and generally have recourse to amulets as a cure, and each, fortunately only undertakes one sort of illness. One is a specialist for fever, another for ophthalmia, and so on. Like the Thebib, he deceives and imposes upon his patients,

in order to obtain money or presents from them. The following fact, related by M. Casimir Henricy, will serve to illustrate this assertion.

A French surgeon was called in to attend an Arab, who had been shot in the leg; the doctor having asserted that the ball was still in the wound, the Arab declared it was impossible, as six Mdaouï had already each extracted one. "Well," said the Frenchman, "I am going to take out the seventh, and this is the one which is causing you all this pain." Accordingly, in a few instants, he presented the ball to the patient, who was delighted, but he remained perfectly convinced that the six charlatans who had practised upon him had really previously extracted six large balls, and doubtless these operations had already cost him six fine sheep. I ought previously to have mentioned that the word Marabout, means in Arab, "tied," or "attached," and this he must be to the Koran, and bound up in the observance of the precepts enjoined in this holy book. Before a Mussulman can receive the title of Marabout, he must have acquired, by exemplary piety and miraculous actions, a great name, and a reputation for sanctity.

Another instance of Arab credulity is the prevalent idea which exists about women who are enceinte. It has always been believed (from the Bey to the peasant) that the child, in many cases, has an objection to enter this wicked world at the time appointed, and therefore goes to sleep, and sometimes remains in this deep slumber for many years. This ridiculous prejudice is often cunningly fostered by the Moorish women for reasons of their own, as if they are childless their husbands often divorce them, and this is doubtless the reason of the extreme submission in which the women of this country live. It is true they can also ask for a divorce, but seldom have recourse to this extreme measure, without very powerful reasons, whereas the mere will of the husband suffices to obtain it for him. A Polish doctor who was attending me said that he had just been summoned for a consultation on the state of one of these ladies. The husband with tears in his eyes besought him to relieve his wife, who was in great suffering, and give her a wakening potion for the child. I asked him what was his answer. "I told him I would give her some medicine which would be efficacious; if I had told him he was in error, he would not have listened to me, and would have

spread about that I was an ignorant doctor, and have spoiled my practice."

Polygamy is more prevalent in Tunis than in Egypt, but it has its inconveniences as elsewhere. If several wives inhabit the same house, quarrels and jealousy are the inevitable results, and the husband's life is rendered intolerable. Dr. Frank relates that he was conversing with a rich Moor who had two wives, and being childless, was thinking of taking a third. "But how do you mean to maintain peace and order in the house with the conflicting interests of these three rivals?" said the doctor. "Oh," replied the Moor, "there are two ways of making them agree; one is to put an end to their quarrels with a stick in my hand, or else to lodge them in separate houses;" but the latter is a method which could only be adopted by very rich people.

It is sad to see in what complete ignorance and subjection these Arab women remain, owing to the Mohammedan policy, which so wills it. Their one idea is to eclipse their friends by their splendid toilettes on the rare occasions when they are allowed to meet. No man is ever allowed to enter a harem, but ladies of high rank, or those having good introductions, can obtain the privilege of access to them.

Such visitors find groups of indolent beauties reclining on cushions in magnificent salons, and smoking, in long chibouques, the tobacco or opium which is carefully prepared by a negress slave.

Monsieur Mignard, however, relates an instance of an exception to the strict harem rules having been made by the Sultan Abdul Azez in favour of M. de Kératry, who was then at Constantinople on a diplomatic mission. The Sultan, having taken a great fancy to him, showed his preference, contrary to all rule, by inviting him to spend a soirée in the palace. Having presented him to several ladies in the harem, the Sultan asked which he admired the most. M. de Kératry pointed out a lovely Circassian. The evening came to an end, the ladies retired, and the Frenchman took leave of his Highness, who invited him to dine with him the following day. The invitation was joyfully accepted, and the dinner was most agreeable and full of *entrain*, but at dessert, a slave brought the head of the lovely Circassian on a gold waiter and presented it to M. Kératry, the Sultan saying at the same time, "It is strictly forbidden in our religion that a Mohammedan woman should marry a Christian. I could not, therefore, give you her whom you had chosen, but from friend-

ship to you I ordered her to be beheaded, that she might never belong to any one else."

Among the different branches of commerce at Tunis is that of perfumery, and especially the attar of rose so highly appreciated in Europe. It is commonly supposed that the purest quality comes from Tunis, but much of this precious essence is sent here from Constantinople and other parts of Turkey, and is prepared for exportation. The word "attar" has often puzzled me, but it seems that its literal meaning is "druggist," "rottl' attary" meaning "pound of the druggist," therefore, essence of roses seems the more correct term in speaking of this delicious scent.

It is always more or less falsified, for otherwise few persons could buy it, as it costs from £120 to £140 sterling for a pint, and it takes 4,000 lbs. of rose leaves to make this quantity. After the distillation quantities of good rose water are made with the same leaves. In order to judge of its purity, amateurs can employ the following test. Place a drop of the essence on a piece of white paper, and put it near the fire: if the liquid evaporates quickly, leaving no mark on the paper, the essence may be considered perfectly pure; but

if a spot remains, it has been mixed with some other essence, probably geranium, which is often used with it. It is more expensive at Tunis than at Constantinople. The red rose is most generally used, but there is a species of white rose, called "nessery," which produces a still more precious essence; it is very rare, and costs double the price of the former; but it would be impossible for lovers of perfumes to procure a more exquisite scent than that of nessery, and some of the rich Moors have it distilled in their houses for their own use.

Large quantities of orange-flower water are also made, which can be bought at a very reasonable price, varying from year to year, according to the orange-flower harvest.

The pure essence of jessamine is as expensive as that of nessery, as it takes so many flowers to furnish a very small quantity of essential oil. It is a favourite flower with the Arabs, who mount the blossoms on little reeds, and put them behind their ears, so as to fall upon the cheek; they also make curious little bouquets of them mixed with pieces of gold paper.

Our English community at Tunis has been

much grieved at the death of a young Englishman of the name of Holden, who, after taking his degree with honours at Cambridge, came abroad for a little relaxation. He went to Rome and Palermo, and at one of these places caught low fever, which developed itself at Tunis; and when his mother, on being summoned, arrived here, he was unconscious, and, after lingering a few days, expired on Whit-sunday morning. He had been nursed with devoted care by some friends with whom he was travelling, and nothing could exceed the skill and attention of the doctor who attended him; but it was an awful blow for his poor mother, who happens to be a great friend of some of my relations, and indeed I had known her in former years myself. The funeral took place the next day in St. George's Cemetery, at which Mrs. Holden was present, though worn with grief and fatigue. Colonel Playfair, H.B.M. Consul General, who has replaced Mr. Reade, also attended, as well as others, all anxious to show their respect and sympathy; and the service was performed by the Rev. Mr. Reichardt, the British Chaplain here.

The Protestant cemetery of St. George's is situated near the Place Carthagine, and is the

earliest Christian relic in Tunis. It was granted, as its name indicates, to England at the beginning of the 17th century, but, unfortunately, the original deed of gift has been lost. Formerly outside the battlements, it is now in the heart of the city. In removing some rubbish some years ago, a series of narrow stone tombs, fashioned after the manner of the Arabs, was discovered, with Latin inscriptions of English names, carved in bold raised letters, and as distinct now as on the day on which they were placed there.

Tunis is inhabited by such a mixture of races that a little account of them may be interesting. The most ancient native race is that of the Berbers, or, as they are called now, Kabyles; these were the first possessors of the country, and are now to be found principally in the mountainous districts. They live in houses roughly built of stone, thatched over with stubble. Their skin is dark, in spite of their blue eyes, but this is from exposure to the sun, as they mostly follow the trades of masons or agriculturists; their foreheads are wide, and always tattooed with a little cross; the origin of this custom is as follows: "After the invasion of the Vandals, the conquerors

had exempted all Christians from paying taxes, and to avoid all disputes the sign of a small cross was adopted on the forehead. When the Kabyles changed their religion to that of Islamism, they still retained the cross just in the same way as they had retained certain Pagan customs when they were Christians.

"These interesting traces of Christianity among the nations of the African shores impressed in indelible characters, and transmitted (without understanding the meaning of them) from one generation to another, give a hope for the future as well as a record of the past."

The character of the Kabyle is frank and truthful, and his word is sacred; but when offended or unjustly treated, his vengeance is cruel and summary. His costume is simple as his tastes; in fact the Kabyles are village people, used to manual labour, being excellent gardeners, and very industrious. Their women are hardy and robust, going barefooted like their husbands, and tattooed on their faces and arms, with large rings in their ears, and on their arms and ankles; they are not veiled; they work in the fields, and are better treated by their husbands than the other Mus-

sulman women, being allowed to share their repasts.

The Arabs are easily distinguished by their slight muscular figures and noble bearing. They have oval faces, with fine features and dark eyes and hair. They are intelligent and chivalric, always faithful to their engagements, brave and dignified. The Arab either loves or hates, is devoted to those he loves, and equally implacable to those who injure him. He respects courage in others, and even haughtiness, for it is always said, "Give an Arab a few blows with your stick and he will think much of you, whereas if you are kind and gentle he will despise you." A propos of which, a French officer the other day, having heard this saying, proceeded to put it to the test. An Arab had annoyed him, but unfortunately in the act of administering a good kick to him, the valiant son of Mars entangled his spur in his cloak, and down he went on the pavement, hurting his hand severely, while the Arab was grinning in the distance.

These people are nomadic in their habits, and remove their douar (collection of tents) from place to place, but often return to their old haunts. The women are pretty, but they marry at eleven or twelve

years of age, and look old at twenty, for they lead a very hard life; there is no repose for them; not only have they the care of the household, and the spinning of tissues for their husband's clothes, and for the tents which they inhabit, but they have to fetch the water, and collect the wood for the fire, carry heavy burdens, and even work at the plough. The husband, meantime, sips coffee and smokes; he occupies himself in breeding cattle and horses and in scratching the soil, which is so fertile that labour is unnecessary for satisfying their few wants. When he has amassed a little money he hides it in places only known to himself, and always pleads poverty. He even makes his unfortunate wife carry his gun on foot, with her child on her back (and this I have seen myself), while he rides comfortably on his horse. No wonder the poor women are worn out and faded while they are quite young, but they bear their yoke with patience, brought up as they are in the belief that their mission is solely to serve man.

When they are ill they are left without care or attention, and when about to become mothers no assistance is given to them. M. Henricy gives a dreadful account of the way in which they are

treated at this time of trial. The poor patient clings to a cord suspended from the axis of the tent, shouting out the praises of Mahomet, and some who are courageous ask for human help. In this case, a strong man is introduced, who lifts her up as high as he can, and then lets her fall heavily to the ground. This treatment often kills mother and child, upon which those present gravely say, "Allah is great," and think no more about the matter; and the husband quickly replaces her. The Arabs believe that women have no souls; the entrance to the mosques is strictly forbidden to them, and they only expect a share of the affection which their husbands bestow upon their horses and camels.

The origin of the name of Moor is not clearly defined; some believe it comes from a Phœnician word, "Mouerym," which was a name given to the western nations; others say it is from a Greek word signifying dark or brown skinned, and that this was the reason why the country they inhabited was called Mauritania. Afterwards, the Saracens were so named who left Africa to overrun Spain, Italy, and France, and then returned to their country. In modern times, the name of Moor has been given to all the inhabitants settled on the African coast.

I have already spoken of the Spanish Moors, who form the aristocracy of this race. Their dress is very picturesque. They wear the red fez with a long blue tassel, and a white or coloured muslin turban rolled round the fez; two waistcoats, the upper one with handsome buttons; a large scarf rolled round the waist, and wide Turkish trousers; white stockings and coloured morocco slippers; and on their shoulders a long gandoura in light-coloured cloth. They are indolent, living a quiet, easy life, and it is difficult to believe that they descend from such turbulent ancestors. They are courteous and full of tact, but very dignified, and seldom laugh aloud, though they have a keen sense of humour, and can indulge in repartee. I will reproduce an amusing anecdote to illustrate this.

"The present Bey of Tunis has turned one of his picturesque old city palaces into a public school for the Moorish youth. It was at the Sadikya College I first perceived by experience the Moorish capability of witty repartee. It was just after our defeat by the Zulus, and General Sir A. C—— was going over the institution. He was requested to examine the boys of the first class. The first question he asked was an unfortunate one—Could

the students point out the provinces lost by Turkey during the late war? If a thunderbolt had fallen into the midst of the room the sensation of horror produced could not have been greater.

"The head boy with wonderful sang-froid pointed out the States in question one after another, but he added, 'Perhaps *mon général* will condescend to show us the province in which the English have been so often beaten, *ces jours-ci.*' General C—— took the boy's shrewd sarcasm in good part, and carried away with him a high idea of the intelligence of the rising generation of Tunisian Moors."

There is another race called Koulouglis, who are the descendants of Turkish fathers and Moorish mothers; they are not numerous, and have nothing interesting about them, being vain and insignificant in character.

CHAPTER V.

The Habits and Customs of the Israelites—Pilgrimage to Jerusalem —Negro Population—Ostrich Hunting.

And now we come to the Jews, or Israelites as they like to be called, who form such an important portion of the population not only of Tunis, but also of all the principal towns in the Regency. It is calculated there are at least 50,000 in Tunis; they are easily recognised by their dress, which consists of a blue or grey cloth bernous, large wide Turkish trousers, and white stockings, a red fez, with a blue tassel, but no turban, two vests of some bright colour, the upper one ornamented with hanging buttons, and a large coloured scarf rolled round the waist. They are generally fine-looking men, very active, industrious, and persevering; they succeed in all they undertake, and engross the principal commerce of the country, and being generally rich, lend money at usurious interest.

The quarter inhabited by the poor is a labyrinth of narrow winding little streets, with no symmetry, as every one builds according to his own fancy, and it is impossible to imagine the dirt and refuse

of every kind which encumber these alleys, and make it a work of danger to pass through them; heaps of children are to be seen playing in these wretched places, screaming and yelling; a busy crowd of men intent upon their own affairs, pushing their way; a horrid smell of oil, caused by their habit of frying fish and meat in these streets, donkeys laden with fruit and vegetables; and Jewish women hardly able to walk from their immense size. In short, it is a part of Tunis which is to be avoided, unless necessity compels people to pass through it. Notwithstanding this unattractive description, a Swiss lady has resided in one of the quieter streets for a quarter of a century, and has devoted herself to the education of young girls in the Jewish school, which is supported by the London Jews' Society.

We were invited most kindly by the Director and English Chaplain, Mr. Reichardt, during the winter, to go to see the prizes distributed to the children, and hear them recite pieces from different authors, principally Italian. We were much gratified, and some of the girls acquitted themselves wonderfully well. Many were in Tunisian costume and these gay colours, and the Christmas

tree so tastefully decorated at one end of the room, and well lighted up, made a very pretty ensemble. Many of the well-known "Hymns Ancient and Modern," were sung in Italian, and the fête concluded with "God save the Queen" in English.

At the age of 12 or 13 these young Jewesses are married, and in many instances they much object to leaving their kind instructors, and prevail upon their husbands to allow them to return and continue their studies. The ceremonies of their marriage last eight days, and some of the details are so absurd and childish that one wonders how resonable beings can follow them so minutely as they do. A fortnight before the wedding the future husband sends embroidered shoes, soap, perfumery, &c., to his fiancée, and a week after this she goes with her friends and an old woman to the baths. Here she is obliged to resign herself entirely into their hands, and without speaking a word, allows them to adorn her.

Her hair is first rubbed with a cosmetic, to make it brilliant, her eyebrows and eyelids are then painted, her nails are stained with henna, and they make her swallow a sort of pâté made with honey and semolina, to fatten her, as it is

considered quite as great a disgrace among the Jewesses to be thin as among the Moorish women, and they feed on the most nourishing food to attain the desired proportions, otherwise they are not considered strong or healthy.

On the Saturday previous to the wedding, which we will suppose to be fixed for the Wednesday following, the future husband comes to the house with his friends "to find the hen," as it is the custom of the fiancée to have a fowl roasted, and to hide it in a secret corner of the house. All these young men then run round the rooms, and search in every corner, making a prodigious noise, and leaving no peace to the inhabitants of the house, till they find it; for he who succeeds in doing so will certainly be married in the course of the year.

The Sunday and Monday are devoted to the preparations for the wedding; the invitations are made, and toilettes arranged; but during all this time the young girl has to seem indifferent to all that is passing around her; she must be absolutely an automaton, according to strict etiquette. She must not even dress herself; indeed, this would be difficult, as her hands are imprisoned in bags, that the dye of the henna may not be rubbed off.

On Tuesday evening the bride is dressed in her finest clothes, but is closely veiled; she is placed in an arm-chair, which is set upon a table against a wall, and there remains for some hours without speaking or moving. Her relations and friends surround her, and the bridegroom is also admitted with his family; one of her oldest relations then raises the veil, and extols her beauty, praising each of her features separately, and then adds, "Well, all this is nothing compared with her voice, her wisdom, and her talents," which are likewise enumerated. Then begins an harangue upon her moral qualities and virtues, the women at each pause calling, "You, you, you." When this elaborate eulogium is finished, the young girl is taken down from her elevated position, the veil falls, and reveals her charms, and her bridgroom is allowed to embrace her; he also puts a piece of gold into her hand, and this example is followed by the relations of the two families, who approach, and place the money on the forehead, cheeks, nose, and chin of the bride, who, according to the rules of the ceremony, still remains immovable.

Wednesday is the day of the religious ceremony. The husband has his head shaved, and plunges

seven times into cold water, in obedience to the old Jewish law. He then goes with his relations to the bride's house, accompanied by two rabbis; the young couple are placed side by side, a covering is held over them, and one of the rabbis, holding in his hand a glass of wine, recites the following formula: "Blessed be the name of God Almighty, who has created the fruit of the vine! Blessed be His Sacred Name who created man from the beginning, and who, seeing it was good that he should have a companion, has allowed us to unite this man to a woman of his own nation." After this invocation the rabbi tastes the wine, and presents the glass to the husband, who tastes it, and passes it to his wife, and then to the relations; the friends press round, each trying to touch the glass with their lips; but many are disappointed, as at a certain signal the glass is dashed against the wall. At the same time these sacred words are pronounced: "If I forget thee O Jerusalem; let my right hand forget her cunning."

The husband then passes a gold ring on his wife's finger, saying, "Thou art my wife according to the law of Moses and of Israel." This is a very critical moment for the husband, as the putting on

the ring decides the marriage, and it sometimes happens that there has been a prior attachment, and that the girl has found means to inform her lover of what is passing. If he, taking advantage of the confusion caused by the breaking of the glass, can make his way up to the girl, and put a ring on her finger, his rival has nothing to do but to hasten away and get over his disappointment as best he can, for the Gordian knot is irrevocably tied by the single fact of the ring being put on. When an accident of this sort happens, the band begins to play loudly, and a grand repast is served to all present, except the husband, who goes alone to his own house.

About 9 o'clock the most distinguished relations on the husband's side come to conduct the young wife to her future abode. They support her under the arms, and lead her through a double row of singers and friends, who walk backwards before the bride, carrying flaming torches. She, to show the sorrow she feels at leaving her family, makes a show of resistance, advancing three steps and receding two. The more slowly she advances the more they sing her praises, extolling her wisdom and modesty. At the moment when she is about

to enter the house, her husband tries to place his foot on hers ; then for the first time she seems to wake up from her inertness, and herself attempts to step upon her husband's foot ; this is quite part of the ceremony, for it is reckoned unlucky for a Jewess, as well as for a Moorish woman, to touch the threshold on the first occasion of entering under the conjugal roof.

A week after the marriage the newly-married couple entertain their friends, and an uncooked fish is placed upon the table, which has been previously prepared by introducing a large nail or piece of iron into its mouth. A good sharp knife is given to the wife, and a blunt one to the husband, who is to cut off the fish's head, whilst the wife cuts off its tail. Naturally, she succeeds at once, and runs off with her friends, while the husband hears them laughing at him, and hacks away vainly at the head of the fish with his blunt knife.

This is the account given by M. de Souhesmes of a Jewish marriage, and I can vouch for its correctness, as a short time ago I was invited to witness this ceremony, but we were first taken to the house of the bridegroom, and conducted through the rooms. Over the door of the bed-room was a

large crown with the Bey's arms, Fatima's hand, and a large gilt horn. Inside the room, over the divan, was placed a sheet of paper against the white-washed wall, having a large fish, some house keys, and Fatima's hand painted upon it. We were told that when the newly-married pair enter this room, the brother of the bride throws two eggs against this paper—much in the same way as slippers and rice are thrown after the happy couple in our weddings—for luck.

The house keys are presented to the bride by the husband's mother, who thus apparently resigns all control over the household.

After we had waited for some time in this room, a great many beautifully-dressed Jewesses arrived, in the usual tight-fitting garments, which they maintain is the ancient Biblical costume, and they bring these verses in support of their assertion. "The king's daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold," and, "upon thy right hand did stand the queen in a vesture of gold wrought about with divers colours."

Cakes and orgeat were now handed round, and they seemed pleased and flattered at strangers coming to witness the ceremony. At last the men

assembled in the court, and the bridegroom appeared, preceded by some boys in a blue costume, who were singing in chorus. The bridegroom, who was a tall cadaverous-looking creature, was accompanied by a very old rabbi. The men's procession was then formed, followed by that of the women. We were placed in the middle, and away we went all through the little dirty, narrow streets, the women trilling as usual.

Then came the ceremony of the bride's being hoisted in her arm-chair on the table, and the details already described. Fortunately no rival presented himself at the breaking of the glass, and the cadaverous man was duly elected.

The rabbis exercise great influence, and are exceedingly particular in enforcing the observance of the Mosaic law. They observe rigorously the Feast of Tabernacles, that of Pentecost or Harvest, the Feast of Expiations, and the Passover.

The Israelites undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as the Moslems do to Mecca, and their highest ambition is to visit the holy city. When we first arrived at Tunis we noticed how the donkeys and camels were loaded with myrtle and other verdure, and on inquiring the reason, were

told that the Israelites at this season made themselves tents with all these branches, and leaving their houses, remained in them for some days, to commemorate their journey through the desert. They respect their Sabbath punctiliously, the shops being all shut, and no business of any kind being transacted. They never eat food which is not prepared by an Israelite, and scrupulously wash their meat in seven waters, and game also, thus depriving it of all taste. On Saturdays, in the fine season, they take their families to pic-nic in the country, and very strange these groups look in their bright-coloured garments, seated at their repast.

On almost all their houses a hand with five fingers spread out, is painted; for they are as superstitious as the Moors, and believe in the "Evil Eye." They quickly invoke the name of "Joseph" if seized with any superstitious fear, that his spirit may chase away the evil demon. The hand is also often painted on their horses' backs in red. They have an extraordinary custom, when any one is dying, of stopping up the wells and cisterns, and all reservoirs of water, that the Angel of Death may not steep his bloody sword in them and render them hurtful.

In Tunis the Jews are Talmudists, that is to say they profess to believe the doctrines of the Talmud, which is for them the continuation of the Bible, and a civil and religious code. They maintain that Moses, when he received the two tables of stone on the Mount Sinai from the hand of the Almighty, had also other precepts given to him which the Elders of the Synagogue preserved till they were made into a code.

The Jews are often to be seen carrying about quantities of merchandise to attract the passers-by, and frequently try to obtain access into private houses; their women visit the harems, and offer their goods for sale. Many years ago this was a dangerous trade, as it not unfrequently happened that they were put to death for the sake of their goods; and at last the Bey made a law that no colporteur should go alone to these houses, but that they should be accompanied by a friend, who was to wait before the door whilst the merchant offered his or her goods; for such was the contempt in which the Moors held the Jews that a Moorish woman did not think it necessary to veil herself before a Jew, and he was allowed to go into the harems as well as the Jewesses.

This simple but prudent measure of the Bey put an end to the risks and dangers to which they had been exposed, and with the advance of civilisation their condition became ameliorated, but until 1818 there were certain misdemeanours for which they were burnt alive. This punishment was abolished on the energetic remonstrances of the consuls, and also by working on the superstitious fears of the Bey, for in this year there was an outbreak of the plague, and it was represented to him that it was a punishment from Allah in consequence of the cruelty shown to the Jews.

In 1785 a ship coming from Constantinople had touched at Susa, and had landed some people attacked by the plague, and this frightful disease quickly spread throughout the country. The Bey, like a good Mussulman, at first despised the precautionary measures and sanitary arrangements suggested to him by the Europeans, but when he saw that persons of his own household were attacked, he modified his doctrine of fatalism so far as to have a barrier placed in his audience hall to prevent any one from approaching, and he abolished the ceremony of kissing hands and only received papers after they had been steeped in vinegar.

Tunis has been visited by this terrible scourge two or three times since 1785; the last time was about forty years ago, and an interesting account was given to me the other day by a lady of a family well known in Tunis, who escaped contagion by the minute and uniform precautions which they adopted.

The French Consul and his family inhabited a foudouk, or large house, with court and garden, which communicated with the house inhabited by the Spanish Consul outside the gate of Carthage, generally known as the Maltese quarter. These families, who lived on the most friendly footing, agreed to isolate themselves entirely from the town, and having assembled their households, explained their intentions, and said that those servants who were not inclined to submit to these conditions must at once leave their house. Provisions were collected for more than a year, and during this time no one stirred from the grounds. Meat was brought by the Arabs, well washed outside the gates, and left there for the family, and bread was made on the premises; and this state of things continued till the disappearance of the epidemic.

The English Consul had adopted the same

measures; but one of his servants, a married woman, desired her husband, who was in the town, to bring her a basket of linen, and by means of cords drew it up to her window, though she had been strictly forbidden to receive anything. The consequence was, she was attacked by the plague and was at once turned out of the house, and I could not ascertain her ultimate fate.

It was observed that the water-carriers and those who carried skins of oil on their bare shoulders, which of course were impregnated with it, were hardly ever attacked by the contagion, but directly they took a bath and changed their clothes they contracted the illness as easily as the rest of the inhabitants. It seems these observations had already been made in Egypt by the military surgeon, Dr. Desgenettes, and also at Smyrna, and they seem to support the efficacy of oil frictions, which have been adopted in these countries with great success by the directors of the hospitals.

I must now say a few words about the negroes, who are very numerous at Tunis, and are to be seen not only in the streets but in all the Mussulman houses, where they act as servants. As every one knows, one of the principal trades at Tunis formerly

was that of negroes, and there was a large market dedicated to this purpose, where people went to buy slaves, or to exchange those who did not please them. A large caravan arrived every year from the central parts of Africa, bringing twelve or fifteen hundred, who were treated with such great cruelty by the slave merchants during the journey across the desert that they hailed their arrival at Tunis with delight; here they were reassured by their country people as to their probable fate, for the Moors treated them very kindly when they took them into their service, and even considered it an act of piety to give them their freedom after a certain period, if they had conducted themselves well.

At the death of the master or mistress of a household, several negro servants were generally liberated; and when a wife of the Bey died, it was the custom for people of rank or importance to buy negroes and at once grant them their liberty There were sometimes as many as 200, and they followed the funeral procession, carrying each a long stick, with a card fixed on the top, bearing the certificate of their freedom. Whilst a negress is a slave she may go about the town on errands with her

face uncovered, but directly she is free, custom compels her to veil herself like the Moorish women.

Dr. Frank gives an interesting account of the causes which led to the state of slavery among this people, and he obtained much of his information from the negroes themselves. The wars which take place in the Soudan or Black Land, between the Kings or Sultans of the different tribes, are very frequent, and the subjects of the vanquished tribe become the slaves of the conqueror, who sometimes keeps them for his own service, otherwise he sells them or exchanges them for linen, arms, powder, cattle, &c. When the negroes go to war they take their families with them, and all travel on foot, carrying a part of the baggage on their heads; some of the women grind the corn, others prepare the food, and if the army they follow is conquered, it is only a change of slavery for them. Another cause of slavery is that the weaker negroes are often overpowered by their stronger brethren, who carry them off and sell them for anything they happen to want. This is sometimes done even between neighbours.

A negress related that one of her acquaintances, knowing the corner of her poor cabin in which she

slept with her little girl of four years old, came during the night, and gently putting aside the reeds, carried off the poor little sleeping blacky without the mother hearing any noise, and she was far away next morning, having been sold to a merchant for some provisions. It also often happens in case of the death of a father leaving a numerous family, and his widow not being able to maintain them, that the Sultan takes the children on pretence of making servants of them, and thus giving them a means of gaining their livelihood ; he gives some present to the mother, but really makes slaves of these children, and has them sold to merchants known under the name of Gellabys, who conduct the caravans to Cairo, Algiers, and Tunis. The Sultan then names a chief, who is charged to maintain order, to sell the slaves and other productions of the country for him, and with the sum realised to purchase all that he requires. Though the sale of negroes is now forbidden in Tunis, the caravans still go to Tripoli, carrying negroes with them, and the Tunisians, by means of agents, still continue to buy them ; but as it has already been remarked, the Moors treat their slaves well, and they do not attempt to regain their

freedom; but even adopt the religion of their masters, and identify themselves with the family; and I have observed this in the family L—— which I so often visit.

The ceremonies which take place at a negro wedding among some of the tribes in the villages of the interior, really are very interesting. The whole population assembles on a "*place*" or open space, as near as possible to the bride's hut. The women pile up bananas, chickens, maize, and cocoa-nuts in one part of the *place*, which are the united offerings of the friends, to be distributed later. Also, carefully shaded from the sun, under the large leaves of the banana tree, are enormous gourds, filled with sparkling palm wine, which produces a most intoxicating effect, and generally transforms the fête towards its close into a wild scene of saturnalian excesses.

Men now advance, and trace large circles, which lessen as they approach the centre, until there is only a diameter of five feet for the last circle; in this space other men heap up flowers and verdure; then, when these preparations are completed, on a signal from the chief, the people approach the hut of the young girl, and she, without showing herself,

asks what they want. In answer they shout "Waha, waha." It is the custom for every young girl before her marriage to plant a cocoa-nut, and it is firmly believed that her happiness depends on the well-doing of the future tree. The girl comes out of the hut on the pressing solicitations of her friends, and is conducted with great shouting and noise to the place where the cocoa-nut is to be planted, and is told from henceforth it must be her care; she is then taken by her young friends to the centre of the circles, and laid on the ground; they pile flowers and leaves upon her till she is completely hidden, and they then retire and join the rest of the crowd.

The bridegroom now makes his appearance, and this is the signal for a tremendous commotion; they all scream and gesticulate, some women throw stones at him, while others address flattering remarks to him; these last are those who have been happy in their married life, while the stones are thrown by those whose marriage has turned out badly, as if, poor fellow, he was responsible for their troubles or their happiness.

At last he is quite confused, and beside himself, when a neutral party comes to the rescue, in the

shape of the young girls who hope soon to marry, they take him and place him on the first of the circles traced on the ground ; there they hold a long conversation, they point out the inner circle where the bride lies half stifled, and suddenly they run back into the crowd. The young man then, with one bound on one foot, jumps into the first circle, then he begins his task, hopping round all the circles traced, at last gets to the centre where his future wife lies, without having stopped once, or touched the ground with the raised foot. But if he has the misfortune to stumble, or should the cramp seize him, then every one falls upon him, and overwhelms him with blows, and he forfeits his bride. Usually however he succeeds, though it is impossible to describe the anxiety depicted on every face till he reaches the centre, and the loud and joyful cry which bursts from every spectator, shows the suspense which they have endured.

Now the poor bridegroom may pause a moment, and is allowed to use both feet in the trial of strength and muscle which awaits him. He remains a moment contemplating the mass of verdure before him, and then walks round, stoops down, and begins by removing some of the branches, and at last

perceives something, and when he is persuaded that his bride is there, with both hands he tears away the leaves and flowers, seizes her violently, and throwing her over his shoulder, rushes away. Then begins a wild race, the whole village is in pursuit of him ; in vain he tries to get into the huts by the way, all are shut to him, he must reach his own, and at last succeeds in doing so, when he sinks down utterly exhausted, but he has made good proof of strength and courage, and has gained the prize.

Another important article of commerce between Tunis and Central Africa is that of ostrich feathers. The chase of these birds is made in the great desert which stretches from Ghadamess to the valley of Ouady Souf, comprising a distance of ten days' journey. The absolute want of water prevents the Arabs from frequenting it except for this lucrative ostrich hunt, for these birds and the wild oxen are the only animals which can live under the ardent sun ; even tigers, lions, and hyenas, fly from this deserted land, on which they can neither live or breathe.

The way of hunting the ostrich is this. The sportsmen mount their horses, taking care to pro-

vide themselves with a small provision of water; they start about midday, when the ostriches generally assemble in bands of a hundred or more. Directly they see the hunters, they take flight, and are followed in hot pursuit. This sometimes lasts for four hours without interruption, till the ostriches, exhausted by fatigue, and paralysed by fright, begin to relax their speed. The hunter, of course, has been able to drink during his long ride, but the ostrich, not having had the same refreshment, at last falls to the ground utterly exhausted, or foolishly hides its head in the sand; the hunter then gets off his horse, and cuts off the head of the ostrich, which can make no resistance; he gives the animal to a man who follows him to carry his food and provision of water, and departs in quest of other prey whilst his companion places the body of the ostrich on a camel which awaits them at a certain place previously chosen. It is very rare that a hunter can take more than two ostriches on the same day. But these birds, timid as they are, next day seem to have forgotten all about the pursuit, so that the hunter is sure to find them in bands again at the places which they usually frequent.

CHAPTER VI.

Visit to Susa—Towns on the Coast—Arab Wedding—Visit to Kairwān—Return to Tunis—Conclusion.

TUNISIA is considered one of the finest countries in the world for sport, as besides the small game which I have already mentioned, lions, panthers, wild boars, jackals, foxes, stags, antelopes, and gazelles, are to be found. There are abundance of flamingoes to be seen in winter on the borders of the lake at Tunis, of immense size, with pretty bright rose plumage.

The lake is also stocked with fish, but Europeans are rather shy of eating them, on account of the refuse of all kinds which is thrown into this reservoir: however the natives eat them apparently with impunity. The fishing on the coast is exceedingly good—red mullet, sardines, tunny fish, and all the rock fish which are necessary to make a good *bouille baisse*, so dear to the Provençal's heart; and my husband promises himself much pleasure during the summer, by fishing on the south-east coast of the Regency.

We much regretted not being able to visit El

Djem, an Arab village of about 1,200 inhabitants which stands on the site of the ancient Thysdrus, and is about 50 miles from Mehedia. It was in this place that the chiefs of the southern tribes, in 1881, decided on the general insurrection of the nomadic Arabs in Tunisia.

The village itself is a wretched place, but it contains a splendid Roman amphitheatre which rivals that of Nismes in size, and is, after the Coliseum at Rome, the most colossal to be found in the world. This monument has unfortunately been partly ruined, for about thirty years ago, during the reign of the Bey Ahmed, some nomadic tribes who had misconducted themselves, took refuge there, and for several days resisted the Bey's troops, who had come to besiege them. At last his Highness gave orders to make a breach in the walls, and this is the cause of the great opening on the western side of the edifice, but the interior is in a tolerable state of preservation. There are fine cisterns in the vicinity, which belonged to the town of Thysdrus, and still furnish excellent water. In 1881 the French soldiers made some excavations, and discovered a large Roman house, and many beautiful columns of colossal dimensions, a lovely mosaic

pavement, funeral lamps and urns, coins and medals, &c. The coins were mostly struck with the heads of Agrippa and Germanicus.

As I intend to conclude this little work with a description of Kairwān, I will here mention the other towns of interest in the Regency.

After Susa, Sfax is the most important of the towns on the south-eastern coast—or the City of Cucumbers, as it is called, from the quantities of this vegetable growing there, as well as melons of all qualities. It is built in the form of an amphitheatre, and surrounded by high walls; and in the country round are to be seen many villas, having gardens well stocked with fruit-trees. It is an important commercial town, and exports oil, wool, sponges, dates, almonds, figs, and raisins, grain, halfa, and woollen materials. The climate is good, the sea breeze in summer moderating the heat most agreeably, and the winters are milder than in most of the other towns.

The town was bombarded by the French on the 15th July, 1881, and the troops landed next day under cover of a heavy fire from the fleet. The Arabs fought bravely; but their arms of defence were old, and of course they could not

compete with their invaders. Still these last had to fight two or three hours before gaining possession of the town; and even then the hopeless struggle was continued from house to house. A detachment of men had arrived from Kairwān to help the Sfaxians, and the cries of a "holy war" resounded on each side; but the town had to surrender, and was occupied by the French the same day. Sfax is one of the few places in the Mediterranean where the tide ebbs and flows.

Gabés is a pretty little town further south, and was occupied without resistance by the French immediately after the bombardment of Sfax. It is situated on a river, which fertilises the gardens round, and they produce abundance of fruit and vegetables. The palms and orange and lemon trees are splendid, and make Gabés a delicious oasis; but pretty as it is, unfortunately the climate is considered unhealthy.

There are several islands in the Gulf of Gabés, of which the most important are the isles of Kerkena, which I have already mentioned as the retreat to which the Moorish ladies are sent who have the misfortune to displease their husbands; and the island of Djerba, also called the island of

Calypso, from a legend which is more poetical than true. This island forms the frontier line which separates the regencies of Tunis and Tripoli, and in shape is almost a square of eighteen miles. We had been very anxious to visit it, for it is one of the most fertile parts of Tunisia, and its gardens are said to be lovely. They produce olives, almonds, figs, pomegranates, and apricots, interspersed with gigantic palm-trees, and vines falling in graceful festoons from tree to tree.

Djerba is the island of the lotus eaters. M. Victor Guérin, who has visited and studied the productions of these gardens, thinks that the lotus was the fruit of a thorny shrub or plant called "damouche;" and, according to the Greeks, it was so delicious that its effect on strangers was total forgetfulness of their country.

In 1561 the Turks had raised a hideous pyramid of human skills in commemoration of their victory over the Spaniards who were commanded by André Doria. This frightful trophy was only destroyed some years ago in consequence of the representations of the French consul. There is now a small garrison of 100 French soldiers on the island. It was an important commercial centre

at one time, as the caravans arrived, bringing gold powder, ostrich feathers, elephants' teeth, and other valuable articles; but this commerce is now absorbed by Tripoli, and the Djerbians are reduced to the export of their own productions, which have been already mentioned.

Sponges are also found in great quantities on this coast, and are sent to a house of business in Paris, which has the monopoly of this article. The dates from the Djerid, or desert, were formerly taken to Djerba and exported to Europe; but this commerce is now entirely in the hands of the Sfaxians. The Djerba dates, though plentiful, are of an inferior quality, and are only used for the distillation of brandy, which the Arabs appreciate greatly, notwithstanding the law of Mahomet.

It had long been planned that we should make an excursion to Susa, Monastir, Mehedia, and Kairwān, and the end of February had been the time fixed for it; but my illness prevented our going, and Captain and Mrs. Dick were also obliged to relinquish this pleasure. But before deciding on our place of residence it was desirable that I should visit these places, as in Tunis there

is very little to be done in the way of business, and M. Barbe had already hired a warehouse at Mehedia for the purpose of clarifying oil by a process unknown to the Arabs, which promised a certain profit, and he had been fortunate in securing the services of an agent who replaced him successfully during his absences at Tunis in the winter. As there will be much that is interesting to relate during our journey, I will write my impressions in the form of a diary.

Thursday, 28th May.—Barthélemy went off early on an araba, or cart, with the luggage, to Goletta, a distance of ten miles, and Marius and I, with Thérèse and Perrita, took the train at 11.50. On arriving at Goletta we called on Madame de Rosen, the lady who had so tenderly nursed poor Mr. Holden, and we were glad to find her a little recovered from her fatigue and anxiety, though far from strong. No mother could have done more than she had, and this will be a lifelong satisfaction to her and to his family. Madame de Rosen told us that Dr. Duncan, on hearing of Mr. Holden's dangerous illnecs, had come to Tunis from the North of Italy. but, unfortunately, too late. We much regretted

not seeing this gentleman, who knew us, and had been in our house at Cannes.

We took a boat at three o'clock, and had a delightful row to the *Kleber*, the Transatlantic steamer which had come from Marseilles the day before, and which makes the round of the coast, stopping to land passengers and merchandise at Susa, Monastir, Mehedia, Sfax, Gabés, Djerba, Tripoli, and Malta, and then reurning to Tunis to take the mails on to La Calle, Bône, Philippeville, and Marseilles. The weather was so lovely, and the sea so calm, that we had an excellent passage, and I was able to enjoy sitting on the deck by moonlight.

Friday, 29th.—Arrived at Susa by break of day. This is the second town of importance in the Regency ; it is situated in a vast bay, the houses are built in terraces on the slope of a hill, and from their dazzling whiteness look as if they had been cut out of chalk. It is surrounded by high fortified walls, and a few palm-trees are to be seen on the summit of the hill near the Kasba, from whence the sea view must be lovely. Susa was the ancient Adrumetum of the Romans and once possessed an excellent port, which is now buried in sand,

and in bad weather the landing is difficult. It is surrounded by olive forests, and is always spoken of as "a fountain of oil." The inhabitants number about 10,000, of which there are 600 Europeans, mostly Maltese or Sicilians, and 1,000 Israelites. Marius landed with Barthélemy, who remained at Susa to guard our possessions, as an empty house has been lent to us, and we go there in a few days.

I am agreeably surprised to find the weather much cooler than at Tunis, where the thermometer was at 79° Fahrenheit in our bedrooms. After some delay, caused by the quantity of merchandise embarked from Susa, we were once more on our way at two o'clock, and soon reached the town of Monastir, surrounded by palm trees.

The population consists of 8,000 inhabitants, and an active oil commerce is carried on here. It is the Ruspina of the ancients; the situation is particularly pretty and picturesque, with its crenelated battlements and white houses, and Kasba on the summit of the hill; the port is one of the best on the coast. Several villages appear in the distance, and in front of Monastir are three islands, one called the Island of Pigeons, the second Tonnara, from the quantities of tunny fish caught in the

vicinity, and the third Quarantine Island. It seems that there are about fifty grottoes, or small square rooms made in the rock, with niches which served formerly for lamps to light those who lived in these caverns, and to hold the different utensils which they required. A little to the south of Monastir are the ruins of Thapsus, once so memorable as the scene of Cæsar's victory over the troops of the republican Roman generals, and of Juba, king of Mauritania.

We arrived at Mehedia about nine o'clock, and had to descend into a little boat which danced about in a very uncomfortable way as the sea ran rather high, and Thérèse and I were glad to find ourselves on shore. Marius' agent, M. Warocquier, had come on board the *Kleber* to greet us, and conducted us through a crowd of Arabs and negroes (who seemed to know Marius very well) to the house lent us by M. Costa, a friend at Tunis.

It all looked very strange, as we entered the town through a large vaulted passage, which serves as a café arabe, and after passing through some narrow passages, arrived at the house, where we were warmly received by Barca and his wife Aïssa, two negroes in M. Costa's service. The house has

not been inhabited for five years, the paper is falling off the walls, and there is a great hole in the ceiling showing the rafters, but there was nothing else to be had, and these trifles did not prevent our sleeping very soundly.

Saturday, 30th.—I was invited to see a negro wedding ; that is to say, the preliminary ceremonies, and Thérèse and I went, as no man was admitted. We went into a little court full of women, of all shades of colour, from jet black to a pale yellow, they were covered with chains and bracelets, on arms and ankles, and wore immense ear-rings. The common dress here is a sort of dark cloth garment, which is kept in place by two immense round silver brooches on each shoulder, and a girdle round the waist. The musicians began to play and to beat the drums, and some made a sort of trilling noise. The bride was quite black, with a white cotton cap on her head ; her hands were enclosed in two red and green silk bags, to prevent her rubbing off the pattern which had been tattooed on them, like a mitten, and the orange dye, called henna, with which her nails had been painted. She was closely covered up, but to-morrow she will be dressed in her fine clothes, and conducted at midnight, by

torch-light and with music, by all her friends to the bridegroom's house. Some of the women were beautifully dressed, and most of them had a large round patch of rouge on their cheeks. Every one had silver hands and fish suspended from their chains, and a sort of diadem on their foreheads.

When we rose to go away, a negress seized me by the hand, and insisted on my going with her to a hut opposite, where there was a new mat for us to sit on, and having left us with another negress to mount guard, quickly reappeared with a dish of kouskoussou, which they entreated us to eat. We tasted it of course, and it really was not bad; at last, we were allowed to depart. I then went to the port to see my husband's warehouse full of large cans of oil, which had been clarified; on the chimney outside was a scorpion, and on that behind the house a fish, and when I asked the reason of these emblems being put there, I was told that the fish was for luck, and if the "Evil Eye" struck the house, the scorpion was there to sting it.

Sunday, 31st.—There is a Roman Catholic church here, but I have not visited it.

I omitted yesterday to say that great quantities of sardines are caught on this coast, and it is during

this month and the next, that the Austrian boats come here to load, having the monopoly of this trade. All the available men and children work at the salting of the fish, and the packing them into barrels for exportation.

We had been invited to go to an Arab wedding about ten miles off, at a place called Soursef, where the Sheikh was holding festivities consequent on the marriage of his son, and which lasted about a week. Sidi Randan, an inhabitant of Mehedia, had most obligingly offered us the use of his carriage, and accordingly we started in it at five o'clock, with three mules abreast.

The country is pretty, though flat, and rich with agricultural produce; we passed several large gardens, full of fruit trees, and brilliant with the scarlet blossom of the pomegranate trees, which are in full flower just now. The coachman took the road that seemed good to him, as there was none in particular, and many were the bumps and jolts we suffered. A young man who accompanied us pointed out the whereabouts of several Phœnician tombs which had been lately discovered; indeed the whole country is full of archæological treasures yet unexplored.

After passing through a plantation of olive trees, we arrived at Soursef, and were most kindly received by the French consul, M. Cretin, who introduced us to some of the Arab chiefs, and then took us to the house, which had been assigned to his use by the Sheikh. He presented me with a lovely bunch of pomegranate blossom, and some grand-looking Arabs gave me little bouquets of jessamine and lemon flower, mounted on tiny reeds, and carnations; almost all had bunches of flowers hanging from their turbans. I produced the few words of Arabic I know, which seemed to amuse them greatly.

After resting awhile we all went to see the village, where there was a fine open *place* with a café arabe, where we seated ourselves, and sipped the perfumed beverage.

M. Cretin related some interesting incidents which happened here during the French invasion in 1881. The inhabitants very naturally made common cause with the nomadic Arabs who resisted the French; and a council of war, consisting of Lieutenant Jauréguibéry, who had the command of the gunboat *Aspic* in the port, M. Cretin the Vice-Consul, M. Epinat the captain of the port,

and others, was held at Mehedia, and it was decided that Lieutenant Jauréguibéry should anchor at the western end of the bay, and according to the indications given, should direct his firing on Soursef, about eight miles distance. Accordingly, early next morning he opened fire, and the first obus fell as if by miracle on the house of the native chief, and burst in the middle of it, doing much damage; other bombs fell in the village to the unspeakable consternation of the inhabitants, who could not imagine from whence they came, till *one, more intelligent than the rest,* cried out that it was a chastisement from Mahomet, who was hurling them obuses from heaven, and that their destiny called on them to submit, which they quickly did the next day, with solemn protestations of fidelity for the future.

One unfortunate labourer was working in the fields, and an obus burst by his side, lacerating his leg frightfully. He was transported to Mehedia, and placed in a mosque which the Moslems devoted to the wounded; his leg was amputated, and a present of a wooden leg made to him, on which I saw him cleverly hopping about!

M. Cretin made here an important discovery of

a Phœnician necropolis, where there were several tombs piledone upon the other. M. Jauréguibéry is the son of the admiral who commanded the French fleet, and who had often received us most kindly and hospitably on board the *Richelieu*, and he and his family had done us the honour of assisting at a fête given for them in the Châlet des Pins at Cannes. The admiral afterwards was made Minister de la Marine, and was distinguished by his uprightness and energetic conduct.

I must say a few words of Monsieur Epinat, whom I have already mentioned as being Captain of the Port at Mehedia. He and his wife have lived there twenty-five years, and have rendered the greatest service to the place, by devoting themselves to the education of the young Europeans and Jews whom they found there, as well as to that of their own children. The results of the good system they pursued are to be seen in the general good-will and friendliness which exists among the inhabitants, so precious in times of difficulty which arise, and which enables them to act harmoniously together.

To return to the Arab café. To my surprise the proprietor spoke such good French, that I enquired how he had acquired such a knowledge of the

language. He then told me he had been three years in the fort of Ile Ste. Marguerite, near Cannes. He had been taken prisoner at the time of the events I have already described, with ten others from Soursef, and seemed to have pleasant recollections of his captivity, speaking with great gratitude of the liberality of the English to him, and in particular of the kindness of a "Milady" who had given a fête for them on the island. It was owing to the generosity of the visitors that he had been enabled to establish this little café.

The Vice-Consul now sent a summons to the *fou*, or buffoon of the village, to come and amuse us. About 200 Arabs all sat round on mats, and presently the *fou* came galloping on a little Arab horse into the midst of the circle with a helmet on his head, adorned with three feathers, and the usual Arab drapery, and shouting and gesticulating. He managed his horse very well, stopping it in a moment, though at full gallop, and then began to imitate the French Consul and some of the Arabs, to their great delight, and they assured me he was very witty. They did not cease to lament our not having seen the Fantasia, which had taken place only half an hour before our arrival. It seems

there were about fifty horsemen, having a gun in each hand loaded merely with powder, who, while galloping past the balcony where the French Consul was seated, discharged the guns simultaneously.

We then returned to the house for dinner, which was strictly Arab, and had been sent by the Sheikh. It consisted of soup, and oh! what soup!—a weak decoction of mutton, flavoured with wool and lemon juice; impossible to eat it. Then came a boiled hen, as tough as possible, a dish of mutton and raisins and beans, then pimentoes and eggs floating in oil, and pastry spread with honey; the less said about it the better. At ten o'clock a messenger came to say the evening festivities were about to commence; so we again traversed the village, and entered a house with an immense patio, which had been roughly covered over with boards to keep us from the dew, which is very heavy in these countries.

All this time I had not seen a woman, though I felt sure there were plenty behind the lattice cages of their windows, scanning us eagerly. I was told that the wedding was between two cousins, that the money might not go out of the

family, and that certainly £250 would not pay all the expenses. The singers and dancers were to receive £48, and their journey paid from Tunis. The Sheikh entertained any strangers who liked to come, besides his friends, and the last day he was to give a feast to the whole village, numbering 3,000 inhabitants. It appears the women of the place are remarkable for their beauty, and certainly the men are very handsome.

To return to the patio, about 800 turbaned Arabs were already seated on mats, and we could see that the galleries, though dimly lighted, were filled with veiled figures, who were allowed to see and hear without being seen themselves. At the upper end of the room was a daïs, with cushioned benches, reserved for the dancers and singers, and we took our places near them, the venerable old Sheikh accompanying us; but we did not see the bridegroom. The Arab band, consisting of clarionets and drums, kept up an incessant noise, and presently a collection was made for the musicians, a sort of herald screaming out the amount and name of the giver, and the women answering by their peculiar trilling sound of "you, you, you," called Toulouil by the natives, which answers to

our "hip, hip, hurrah." This went on for an hour or two. At last the Tunisian troupe arrived, consisting of three men and two women; one was enormous, and covered with jewels; there were rings on every finger, and on one finger there were three, all large diamonds, or probably imitation. They seemed to please their Mussulman audience greatly; but I am afraid we did not appreciate their music, which consisted of a violin, a guitar, and two instruments called Tahart and Darbouka.

The singing was still more excruciating, and we were glad when one of the men got up to dance, which he did with a large pitcher of water on his head, balancing it in the most wonderful way. Of the women's dancing I shall only say I never wish to see it again. At two o'clock in the morning we took leave of the Sheikh, and drove back to Mehedia with the three mules, and it was four o'clock before we were in bed.

Monday, 1st June.—M. Warocquier sent us a bottle of palm wine, which is considered very strengthening. I had never heard of such a thing, but it seems that the crown of the tree is cut off, leaving a little heart in the centre. A canal is made all round, with an incision, into which a pipe

is introduced. As the sap rises in the tree, it flows into this pipe, at the end of which a vessel is fastened to receive the juice, and this is what we drank; it is only good when fresh, as it soon begins to ferment; but the taste is delicious, and it was not expensive, a quart being sold for twopence. The Arabs, who are forbidden to drink wine, by the law of Mahomet, allow this palm liquor to ferment, and it then produces an intoxicating effect.

The wedding fête was to continue eight days; when the last evening comes, the bride, followed by her intimate friends and relations, goes in procession to her husband's house, clothed in her richest garments, and a flower painted on her forehead, which takes the place of our traditional orange flower; her hands are also painted, and the nails dyed with henna. Two old men of her family support her, as she walks in the midst of the torch-bearers, and the women trill, "You, you, you." When they arrive at the house, the bride is lifted over the threshold, for it is important that her feet should not touch it, as this would infallibly bring misfortune upon her; and this was also the ancient Roman usage.

All the women assemble in one room, and take their repast together, while the men have theirs apart. As for the bridegroom, he is shut up in what the French call a *cabinet de réflexion*, and eats alone ; and at midnight every one retires to rest. It will be seen that there is a great affinity between the Jewish and Arab marriages.

In the afternoon we went out fishing, but the sea was rather "in a bustle," and Thérèse and I were glad to land at the eastern extremity of the peninsula, for so Mehedia may be called. This was a Phœnician port, but it is now blocked up with stones and sand ; some remains of marble columns mark the entrance, and there are about two hundred holes pierced in the rocks, which were the Phœnician tombs. Mehedia has changed masters very often. The ancient place where Hannibal's tower formerly stood is to be seen in the vicinity. There is something peculiarly attractive in the position of the village, and the inhabitants are friendly and pleasant. We had a charming walk back to the town, and on going home were surprised to find a great turtle in the court, weighing more than 20 lbs., which the soldiers of the little garrison here had caught, and *not knowing what to*

do with it, threw it to Barca, the negro servant, who keeps this house, and told him to take it away!

Tuesday, 2nd June.—We have held long consultations over the turtle; Marius, who is such a good cook, was quite at fault, having only a pleasant recollection of the soup he had tasted in London; Thérèse could throw no light on the subject; and I, knowing so well its boundless resources in the matter of fins, cutlets, and green fat, felt quite vexed to be so ignorant. At last we begged one of the large fins of Barca, and a kilo of the flesh for soup, which he gave us; but I am sorry to say the turtle was a signal failure, and I must take lessons in England as to its cooking.

In the afternoon I went with Madame Warocquier to see Madame Randan, the wife of the Arab gentleman who had lent us his carriage to go to Soursef. She is a very pretty young creature, and has one little boy, but she is in great distress, as her husband is about to take a second wife. She said it was not his fault, but the girl in question had been adopted by his parents, and consequently they were obliged to give her a dowry, and by making the son marry her, the money did not go out of the family! We went to see another family,

where the mother-in-law had elephantiasis, and her feet and legs were frightfully swollen. She and her daughter-in-law showed us their costumes, which were different from the Tunisian, and much more respectable. Instead of the cuffia on the head, they wear a broad velvet band across the forehead, studded with jewels, and gold hanging ornaments, and braids of hair on each side, which was much more becoming; and the dress of brocaded silk, embroidered with gold, looked like an immensely wide chemise, and came down to the ankles, which are always ornamented with massive gold chains. They gave us some Arab cake, made with honey, and some apricots.

The living at Mehedia is ridiculously cheap; we had three fine rougets for threepence, a good sized chicken for sixpence, and eggs were threepence a dozen, meat very cheap, and in the season game is so plentiful that a partridge is sold for threepence, or even less. But the difficulties of living are also great; as there is no baker, every family has to make their own bread; before an ox is killed, every part is sold, so as to be sure that there will be no loss.

Also a more serious difficulty arises in thinking

of Mehedia as a residence; there is no medical man, and the only resource is to send to Susa, a distance of forty or fifty miles. It is true that the inhabitants are trying to raise a subscription of two or three hundred pounds annually to induce a doctor to reside there; but this is not easy to effect, as the people are poor, and object to give money for what, after all, they may not require. We paid a visit to M. Cretin, the French Consul, who showed us some curious antiquities found at Mehedia, and two little lamps in red pottery, with the monogram of our Saviour upon them.

Wednesday, 3rd June.—A carriage had been sent for us from Soursef, and we left at Mehedia at five a.m. It was a lovely morning, and the first mile being by the seaside, we saw the pretty sight of the arrival of the boats loaded with sardines. Our way afterwards led us through forests of olive trees, some of which, I was told, numbered some centuries. Our first halt was at Mokennine, the principal market of this region, where most business is done in grain, oil, wool, and halfa, of which great quantities are sent to England for making paper; and this is also a great silk emporium, all the villages round bringing their tissues. We took coffee with

some Arabs, and it was most amusing to see them crowding round us, and replacing each other, so that all might take a good look, and examine our clothes.

We resumed our way, and fell in with a troop of forty or fifty little donkeys, trotting briskly in front of at least 150 camels, who were on their way to Mokennine. It really was a grand sight to see them stalking along so proudly, and at their sides the little ones, which are so pretty when young. Monsieur Warocquier gave us a description of the extraordinary way in which they are treated at the time of their birth. They are beaten hard, and thrown about, rubbed violently, and, poor animals, martyrised in every way; and the more they are beaten, the stronger they become.

It was eleven o'clock when we arrived near Monastir, and avoiding the town we passed through a vast sandy plain—not a bird or a blade of grass to be seen. It gave us an idea of the desert, such perfect stillness, the burning sun overhead, and in the distance the little town, with a wide crescent of beautiful palm-trees on either side, forming the oasis. Neither was the mirage wanting, for we were admiring the beautiful water which seemed so blue, when we found out it was a complete illusion.

A few camels here and there were standing or lying about in picturesque attitudes, forming the orthodox feature in the scene; indeed, we remarked that this miniature desert was a perfect mise en scène, and looked as if it had been got up on purpose for us! We passed through a thicket of palm trees, and singling out a group of eight, ate our luncheon under their agreeable shade.

The rest of the route was not particularly interesting, but I must not forget to mention the immense carob-trees which we passed, with their beautiful shining leaves. I had often seen them in the neighbourhood of Nice (the tree bears large beans, which are given to horses), but I had never seen any trees equal to these in size. The leaves change colour in autumn, and become deep red; any one who has travelled on the Corniche road must have remarked them.

We arrived at Susa about two o'clock, and drove to the funny little Arab house belonging to M. Warocquier, where Barthélemy awaited us. As usual, nothing but a thick white wall was to be seen from the exterior, but on entering, we found ourselves in a little square court, with three long narrow rooms round, and a wretched kitchen. We

soon, however, set to work, and hung up some curtains, and made the rooms look quite comfortable; and as we had only one table, Barthélemy nailed the cover of the bath on an upright wooden case, which served as dinner-table, and Perrita installed herself in the bottom of the case on some straw.

We went out in the evening, and walked round the town, which is entirely commercial; the climate is said to be very healthy, and particularly favourable to Europeans; the principal articles of export consist of oil, all sorts of grain, wool, and soap. I observed several marble columns at the corners of streets let into the walls, and I was told that there are many in the interior of the houses, which the Mussulmans utilise as benches, or to support the staircases—vestiges of ancient splendour. The town has been bombarded about a dozen times in the last three centuries by the different nations who have attacked it, and yet it has always managed to rise up again and prosper. In 1881, it surrendered at once to Colonel Moulin, and it is now well fortified; there is accommodation near the Kasbah for ten thousand men.

Thursday, 4th June.—The weather is delight-

ful, the thermometer never rising above 75° Fah., while before leaving Tunis it marked 79° and 80°; and there is a pleasant fresh breeze from the sea. M. Warocquier made his appearance unexpectedly from Mehedia, having ridden over during the night. He related to me his adventures in 1881 at the time when the Arabs, profiting by the undefended state of the French railway, seized on the station of Oued Zerga,* which is about seventy miles on the Western side of Tunis, and committed fearful acts of vengeance, tearing up the railway, setting the station on fire, burning the station-master alive, and massacring the other employés.

M. Warocquier witnessed this terrible scene from a bush, where he lay concealed with his Arab servant. He had the charge of a large property in the neighbourhood, belonging to a gentleman who employed him as his agent, and was on his way to Tunis to pay his employer a large sum of 10,000 piastres, or £300, arising from some sales which he had been instructed to make. This money he had carefully concealed in his belt,

* Oued is the Arabic for river; it was changed into *Guad* by the Arab conqueror of Spain, which accounts for so many of the rivers in this country beginning with this syllable.

but it was well known that he had received it, and the Arabs made an active search for him, after committing the above-mentioned atrocities at Oued Zerga. M. Warocquier gave a thrilling account of the suspense he endured, every moment expecting to be discovered. He said to the Arab, "There is no chance for me; do you take this belt with the money and carry it to the owner, for you will be allowed to pass unmolested; as for me, I must take my chance." The Arab's answer was this, "Comment donc! nous avons mangé le pain et le sel ensembles, et tu me proposes de t'abandonner! Jamais! nous ne nous séparerons pas, seulement, dans le cas que nous serons découverts, voici comment nous ferons. J'ai un fusil, tu as ton revolver, nous réserverons chacun une balle, et puis nous nous mettrons dos-à-dos, tu tireras dans mon oreille gauche, et moi, je tirerai dans ton oreille droite, et nous mourrons ensemble, plutôt que de tomber entre leurs mains." This was said with bated breath; they remained until midnight without stirring; by a miracle their hiding-place was not discovered, and they succeeded in reaching Béja, where they put themselves under the protection of the French Consul.

M. Warocquier, feeling that he owed his life to the fidelity of the Arab, wished to give him a substantial token of his gratitude, and presented him with a rouleau of 1,000 piastres; but the Arab threw it down upon the table, saying, "Veux-tu m'insulter? Penses-tu que j'ai agi ainsi envers toi pour de l'argent? Si cela avait été mon idée, je serais parti avec la sacoche; non, je l'ai fait parce que tu es mon ami."

The Arabs are generally faithful to their engagements, and their word once given is sacred.

When my husband engaged his servant, he and M. Warocquier took him to the mosque, and there made him eat bread and salt, and then swear to be faithful and secret about all that was done, which was particularly necessary, as the method of clarifying oil was quite unknown at Mehedia, and Marius was looked upon as a sorcerer by the Arabs, because he had told them he had a particular sort of powder which he used; the real fact being that the process consists in heating the oil to a certain degree, and letting it repose for a given time, when it becomes bright. It seems that the servant has faithfully kept his oath.

So strong is the feeling of respecting the life

and property of a person whose salt has been tasted, that I must relate the following anecdote of an Arab thief, who, by means of adjoining terraces, had succeeded in effecting an entrance into the house of a rich merchant, who was absent at the time. He found all sorts of booty; and after opening all the boxes and drawers and making bundles of their contents, he descended into the cellar; here, it being dark, he stumbled against a large packet, which he took for sugar, but on tasting it, found it was salt! This was enough: with many imprecations on his bad luck, he abandoned everything; and the proprietor, on his return, was much astonished to see his property in such disorder, but nothing was wanting.

Friday, 5th June.—Our life passes very quietly here. We have been searching for apartments, but it is very difficult to find any. However, in a few days the Ramadân, or Lent of the Moslems, begins; it lasts a month, as I have previously said in the first pages of this book, and a rigorous fast is observed during the daytime. Any one wishing to give up his house or apartments must do so in the course of this month, or else he is bound to

remain for another year ; so perhaps we may soon hear of something which will suit us.

I was much amused with one of the Moors in the Perfumery Souk at Tunis the other day. He was lamenting the approach of Ramadân, and complaining of having to fast all day, when a young lady who was with me, and spoke Arabic, very slily said, "Oh, but, you know, you make up for it at night," at which he laughed, and admitted this was true. He intends to go to Mecca, but not as his ancestors did, by joining the Rakeb or caravan, and making his pilgrimage through the desert, but by an English steamer which touches at Goletta ; it takes the pilgrims on board and lands them at Djedda for a very small sum. This mode of transport has been adopted by many Tunisians, as easier and more economical, if not so romantic.

Saturday, 6th June.—In the course of our walk this afternoon we met Sœur Joséphine, who who has resided here for the last forty years, devoting herself to the care of the sick and poor, without distinction of religion. She is quite idolised by the Arabs, who call her the Marabouta, or Sainte Femme, as they know she will go at any moment during the day or night to nurse them if

ill. She is the superior of a religious house, and when her services were requested in a village near Susa for the wounded in 1881, she was entreated by the Sœurs not to go, as they feared some harm might happen to her; but she said, "I am not afraid; no one will touch Sœur Joséphine: my Arabs would rather die than see their Marabouta ill-treated."

Susa is surrounded by large cemeteries, which have no wall to protect them. The Arabs have great veneration for the dead, and it is as great a sacrilege to walk over the grave of a "true believer" as to enter a mosque. They say the earth which covers the dead should never be disturbed, and every Mussulman has a right to his own tomb, which is never used for the burial of any other member of his family; so, of course, the country round these towns is a vast necropolis. A heap of stones marks the place of a grave; but, as the graves all resemble each other, it must be difficult for any one to identify the place where his friends are buried, as there are no inscriptions. The tombs of their saints are kept with more care, and the monument is generally built near the house where the saint died; or, if he died suddenly out

of doors, it is then erected on the place where he fell down.

This accounts for some of the graves which are to be seen in the bazaars of Tunis. It is believed that the ashes of certain Mussulmans have the privilege of working miracles. These monuments are called "marabouts," and are little round domes, whitewashed all over. They give their names to the nearest villages, which is the reason why so many bear the names of individuals.

Sunday, 7th June.—We attended service at the Roman Catholic Church, which is a good-sized building, capable of holding from three to four hundred persons. There are also several synagogues for the Jews, who are very numerous here, and absorb most of the commerce of the town.

At ten o'clock at night we started on our long-projected expedition to Kairwān, in a close carriage, four horses abreast. The coachman had no lanterns, though it was a dark night, and he seemed utterly to scorn the idea of them. The great gate of the town was already shut, and there was some delay in getting it opened; but at last we were fairly on our way, and I must own that I felt a little apprehension, and regretted we had not taken

Barthélemy with us, when I saw we were in the midst of a vast, desolate plain. However, I consoled myself by the sight of a revolver Marius had brought with him, and still more by thinking that, after all, it is the custom of the country to travel by night, and we had never heard of any travellers being attacked.

The road was dreadful, intersected by little mounds of esparto grass and hollows, so that it was a series of bumps and jolts, and I do not know how the springs of the carriage resisted the constant strain.

At last we swerved in such a way that we thought we must upset; the coachman had gone to sleep, and we had fallen into a hole. However, he got down, and pulled us out somehow, and soon afterwards the daylight began to appear, and it was very beautiful to see the lovely sunrise. The vegetation was very scant, only esparto grass to be seen, or halfa, which forms an important article of commerce between England and Tunisia for making paper.

At about 5 a.m. we came in sight of the holy Moslem city, and very picturesque it looked, with its forest of minarets, its round cupolas, and the high, white, crenelated walls of the ramparts,

intersected with towers and bastions. Our way lay through two dried-up watercourses, which in winter are full, and make the journey to Susa a work of some danger and difficulty.

At last we arrived at Kairwān, and stopped at the only hotel in the place—outside the walls. It is a wretched, poor, dirty inn, and we were horrified at the bedroom. A sleepy waiter came to prepare it, and I ventured to make an enquiry as to whether there were any obnoxious insects, everything looked so suggestive of them. "Oh non, Madame, pas beaucoup dans cette saison," said he, in a cheerful and re-assuring tone; and, seeing my horror, he hastened to say he had not seen one this year, which, I think, was a kindly-meant fib. We were, however, too tired with the severe carriage-exercise we had taken to be too particular, and were thankful to rest a while.

At nine o'clock we went to call on the Chef de l'Intendance, who was no other than the husband of the young French lady with whom we had travelled from Marseilles last September, as well as with her mother and sisters, and the pretty, wilful little girl. We were all pleased to meet again, and had much to communicate of our different

experiences; and they seem, equally with ourselves, to appreciate the charming Arabs. Two of the ladies went with us to visit the town and Souks, which are not to be compared with those of Tunis; and we arranged to meet at three o'clock to visit the mosques, etc.

After our déjeuner, which was an agreeable surprise in the way of food, our friends came for us, and first we called on the commanding officer of the district of Kairwān, who is lodged in the Dar-el-Bey. We were shown into the patio, in the centre of which was a lovely garden, quite an oasis, with palms and lovely creeping plants and hanging baskets. The Colonel received us most kindly, and said he should have offered us beds there, had he known of our arrival, as he was aware of the slender resources of the hotel. After we had taken some refreshment, and visited the apartments, we took leave; and, with a spahi sent by the Colonel to accompany us, went to the Djama-Kebir, or Great Mosque, which is situated in the northern part of the town, and can only be approached by little tortuous streets.

Before 1881 the entrance was formally forbidden to Christians, or "roumis," as they were

called, who would have been exposed to certain death had they dared to pass over its threshold; now, which is very striking, we were allowed to enter the mosques of Kairwān, *the* Holy City par excellence; while, in Tunis it was impossible to obtain permission for travellers of either sex to visit the mosques. Kairwān is the religious capital of Tunisia, as Tunis is its political capital. Founded by the Emir Okhbah in A.D. 675, this Holy City of North Africa was never visited by any Christian for at least a thousand years.

From time to time, at rare intervals, travellers, with an order from the Bey, were allowed to enter, though the local authorities had the power of refusing were they so minded. But the travellers were hurried through side streets, accompanied by a strong escort, and were never allowed to enter the mosques; and finding it useless to remain, took their departure as quickly as possible.

Mr. Broadley relates that "Sir Grenville Temple, in 1830, journeyed to the present hot-bed of all the bigotry of Mohammedanism in Africa. He was, nevertheless, able to tell very little about it, beyond the names of its gates, for his promenade through the town was managed with the greatest mystery,

and after rejecting a proposal of the Caid to take a walk in the dark, he was finally allowed to parade through the streets, observing a most dignified silence and a steady, solemn pace.

"The Marquis of Waterford, ten years later, very nearly lost his life from a well-directed brick-bat, during the riot that ensued. Any and all of those Moslems inhabiting this venerated metropolis where the Crescent reigns supreme would willingly have exposed their lives to keep out Jew or Christian. There the Muezzin, who calls the Faithful to prayer from the summit of the minarets, has never been offended by the sight of any other religious symbol on a rival place of worship where the name of Mahomet was not invoked; there for twelve centuries the Imam interpreter and apostle of the Koran has never been in the presence of a minister of the Gospel." The French troops entered the city in 1881 without striking a blow. A formidable explosion of religious fanaticism was expected from the Mussulmans, but they had learnt their lesson so well, and were so convinced of the uselessness of resistance, that they allowed our soldiers to desecrate the soil of the Holy City without making any effort to prevent them.

The Moslems, as every one knows, are fatalists, and when they saw that their Bey had allied himself with the French, whom Mahomet was powerless to extirpate, they mournfully resigned themselves to their fate ; but what must have been their feelings, at seeing soldiers bivouacked in their mosques, and even camels !—and yet the walls did not fall down and crush these profane roumis.

But I have made a long digression, and must return to the door of the Great Mosque ; and here, though my delight was great, and my highest expectations were fully realised, I decline, with my feeble pen, to attempt a description of the varied beauties of the interior, and of the grand relics of the past, persuaded as I am of the superior pleasure my readers will feel on reading an extract from Mr. Broadley's interesting work :—

" The south-east end of the Mosque measures 85 yards ; a single porch in its centre is appropriated exclusively for the entrance of the Bash-Mufti. The sides of the building are 143 yards in length, and each possesses four entrance-porches, the finest of these facing the ramparts. Mr. Rae thus describes it : 'It has an outer horse-shoe arch, and an inner one, which contains the door

opening direct into the prayer-chamber. The exterior is a finely-proportioned piece of Saracenic work; it has a row of arched panels along the upper portion of its sides, and the dome and interior of its sides are in plastic fretwork.' Midway on the same side is the sacred well of Kefâyat (Plenty). It is fenced in by a low wall, its aperture is lined with different-coloured marbles, and tradition asserts that it communicates directly with the spring of Zem-zem at Mecca. It has hardly ever failed to yield a plentiful supply of water. The north-west end is somewhat narrower than that facing the south-east. It measures only 75 yards across, and the Minár rises in its centre. The four porches on both sides of the building correspond, and they are divided by enormous buttresses of solid masonry. The interior of the mosque may be divided into the prayer-chamber (40 yards in length by 85 in breadth), the vestibule adjoining it, and a great cloistered court. The roof of the prayer-chamber is loftier than that of the vestibule, and that of the vestibule higher than that of the court.

"The prayer-chamber is divided into a great central nave, with eight aisles on each side of it.

These are formed by parallel rows of ten columns each, the two nearest to the eastern wall being close together. The pillars of the lesser aisles are of various-coloured marbles, and are about fifteen feet in height. The capitals, in many cases, evidently do not belong to the columns on which they rest, but they are generally of white marble or stone. From the capitals spring semi-circular arches, supporting a flat ceiling of dark-coloured wood. In the south-west walls of the prayer-chamber thirteen columns are embedded in the masonry, three close together on one side of the porch and one on the other. The latter evidently came from some Byzantine church, and its capital consists of a grotesque arrangement of birds and flowers. The columns of the centre nave are at least twenty-two feet high. Their arches support a wall covered with tracery, and a lofty circular roof. The nave terminates in a dome, lighted by small painted-glass windows. Two groups, of four columns each, mainly support the weight of the cupola. The Mihráb niche in the east stands between two red porphyry pillars of great beauty, and is lined with delicate mosaic in marble and lapis-lazuli. On one side of it is a large square of

white marble, covered with emblems in mosaic and surmounted by a slab of verde antique; on the other stands the ancient "mimbar," or pulpit, of dark, carved wood, from whence the Imam recites verses from the Koran, some ten feet high, and having twelve steps and a number of small receptacles with bronze hinges below them. The pillars of the nave are arranged in groups of two or three together, and one of these clusters is worn away by the Faithful squeezing themselves between them to prove their 'purity of soul.' The total number of columns in the prayer-chamber is 296.

"The pavement consists of small slabs of white marble, hopelessly broken. The vestibule is approached by seventeen elaborately carved and panelled wooden doors. When these are open, the dim religious light which generally pervades the seventeen aisles disappears.

"The great central door is surmounted by a horse-shoe arch, the head of which is filled up by fine arabesque fretwork.

"In the vestibule are thirty-four pillars, those in the centre being much higher than the rest. This part of the building opens on to the cloister beyond, a vast quadrangle, paved with white

marble, and almost entirely surrounded by a covered arcade, only broken by the Minár. This arcade contains eighty-six columns on either side and twenty-seven at the end. The total number of the pillars in the interior of the Great Mosque is therefore 439—not far short of the 500 spoken of by El Bekiri, a statement usually looked on as fabulous. The counting of these columns is undoubtedly a puzzle, for some of the pillars are so placed as to be almost invisible to the casual spectator. In this court are several other Byzantine columns. On four of the pillars Arabic inscriptions are carved. One belongs to the fourth century of the Hegira, and its design is extremely curious.

"Below the court are enormous cisterns, and in the centre an ancient sun-dial.

"The Minár is a massive square building of stone, consisting of three storeys, one smaller than the other, and each having a battlement of round-headed crenellations. In the interior is a white marble staircase, composed of fragments of Roman pavement and ornamentation. It has 129 steps, and is about 100 feet high. The view from the summit was one never to be forgotten. Immediately below were the cupolas, terraces, tortuous

streets, and battlements of Kairwān, farther on its suburbs, with its border of koubas and tombs; to the west, the great camps of Generals Logerot and Forgemol, with their almost countless tents and vast convoys; far away to the north, the mountains over which the French troops had marched on Kairwān; to the south, the hills over which the columns must now pass on their expedition towards Gabés and Gassa."

Leaving the Great Mosque, a short walk brought us to a remarkable building in the centre of the town, the Mosque of the Three Doors; the exterior of this edifice is thus accurately described by Mr. Rae. "It has a plain façade with a triple gateway, the arches of which are supported by marble columns. Its chief feature is the rare old carved stonework, which gives it the air of the front of a fine old Crusaders' church. It runs above and about the arches: extending across the front in broad bands of successive texts and ornament, in solid deep chiselling; first a line of running foliage two feet in depth; then a band of Kufic or early Arabic characters free and bold; then a row of alternate panels of carvings, each containing a single rose or a half pattern, then texts and

carvings alternately; and finally, the mouldings and corbels of the cornice." The interior consists of one poor room, some thirty feet broad, by twenty feet deep. Its roof is supported by sixteen columns, most of them having richly sculptured Corinthian capitals. The Creed of Islam, in raised bricks, runs around the stunted Minár; and this feature is general in nearly all the mosques in Kairwān.

About a mile from the centre of the town stands "the grandest and most important building in Kairwān—the tomb, zaouia, and mosque of 'the shrine of my Lord, the companion of the Prophet.' The entrance to the interior of the sanctuary is through a doorway in the base of a Minár, which is built in the angle of a spacious court. The exterior of the Minár is almost entirely coated with blue and green tiles; and on either side of its upper portion, there is a double, round-headed window, divided by a marble pilaster in the centre. Its roof is formed of bright green tiles, terminating in a gilded crescent. The lower storey of the tower forms the lobby or vestibule of the main building. Its interior is lined with the brilliant Tunisian faïence of the seventeenth century, surmounted by panels of arabesque fretwork. A second door

opens from this apartment into an oblong cloister. The arcade running round it, rests on white marble pillars and arches, and it covers a low marble seat on either side. The walls are decorated in the same fashion as the lobby. At the upper end are two windows and a door of pure white marble, highly decorated, and of Italian origin. This leads into a second vestibule crowned with a fluted cupola, each division of which is adorned with lace-like fretwork. The sides are covered with faïence, and panels of finely-chiselled carving in cement, A door at one side communicates with a mosque and two other cloisters, surrounded by conventual cells. In each of the four walls of the apartment, is a small window, filled with old stained glass; and the circular band of arabesque design, from which the melon-shaped dome springs, is pierced with eight other apertures filled with coloured glass which is nearly concealed by delicate tracery, throwing a thousand variegated reflections on the marble pavement beneath. Beyond this beautiful room, is a broad court surrounded by an arcade of white marble pillars, and arches, supporting a wooden roof beautifully painted in squares. In a corner of the court is a cell containing a tomb.

Here lies Abdullah Ben Sharéf el Hindowi, an Indian pilgrim who sought an asylum, and found a grave in Kairwān, a century ago. At the farther end of the cloister is a doorway and two windows from Rome or Florence. Their cornices are profusely adorned with fruit and flowers, and the jambs of the door are picked out in red porphyry. A massive grating of bronze fills each window. The door itself is of carved dark wood. It led to the tomb of 'my Lord the Companion,' a more sacred spot, if possible, even than the Mihráb of Okhbah himself; for here, for nearly twelve hundred years, has slumbered a personal friend of the founder of the faith of Islam, who lived, died, and was buried, wearing always, as a symbol of devotion, a portion of the Prophet's beard on his breast.

"I was the first European who ever entered this Moslem sanctum sanctorum. The chamber is about twenty-one feet square, and lofty. Its walls are covered with a geometrical pattern worked out in black and white marble. Four lengthy inscriptions are embedded in them, and the room is dimly lighted by four small windows of rose-coloured and blue glass. From the cupola of fretwork hangs a grand old chandelier of twisted Venetian glass.

Below this is the tomb itself, surrounded by a high grating of bronze, shut in by four marble columns about seven feet high. From a rod, on a line with the grating, hung festoons of ostrich eggs and golden balls. The catafalque above the grave is covered by two elaborately embroidered palls; the first, of black and white velvet, adorned with Arabic inscriptions in silver, was the gift of the late Ahmed Bey; the second, of pink and blue brocade, was a votive offering from Mohammed-es-Sadok. Over these hung thirteen banners, rich in gold, silver, and needlework—the tribute of the successors of Hussan-ben-Ali to the sanctuary of the Sidi Bou Awib. Our visit was certainly unexpected, for at least a dozen fine Arabic MSS. rested on as many lecterns of mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell in front of the screen. The guardian of the zaouia could hardly realise the fact of Christians desecrating, by their presence, such holy ground. Running his amber chaplet through his hands with feverish haste, he suddenly threw himself upon his face, and probably prayed to be forgiven. Some Algerian soldiers who had followed us prostrated themselves before the tomb, and eagerly kissed the edge of the palls, through

the metal lattice work. Looking at the bright white marble pillars of the cloister, my eye fell on one remarkable capital; at either corner a bird supported a Greek cross in the centre. The spoils of some fair Byzantine church had evidently been brought to honour the resting-place of the 'Friend of the Prophet.'"

These extracts are all the more interesting from Mr. Broadley having been the first European who entered these sanctuaries. The Moslems are now used to the sight of strangers, though there is still some difficulty in gaining admission, and the guardians were evidently averse to our entrance; but the presence of the Colonel's spahi, of M. Espanett, the commissariat officer and our friend, acted powerfully upon them. However, they remonstrated when we approached too near the tomb of "My Lord the Companion," and motioned us off the beautiful Kairwān carpets which surrounded it; but M. Espanett, with an energetic "Qu'est-ce que cela signifie?" ordered them to be rolled up. He told us afterwards that these carpets are made by women, who of course are never to be seen, but the French, in 1881, bought them at a very moderate price; the colours are lovely, and harmonise so well

As we had resolved upon returning to Susa the same evening, we were unable to visit many of the mosques; but those I have mentioned are the most noteworthy among the seventy which adorn the city.

The zaouia, or college of Muhammed-ben-Aïssa, which is situated near the Bab-el-Djellabine, or Tanner's Gate, deserves a visit. Here is the seat of that species of North African freemasonry, of whose revolting rites I have given a description elsewhere. The principal hall is oblong, consisting of a cupola with two aisles, supported by sixteen fine Roman columns. The drums, tambourines, and banners, which were suspended from the wall, are employed during the ceremonies; festoons of ostrich eggs and golden balls ornamented the dome. Hideous as these ceremonies are, the Mussulmans continue to take the utmost pleasure in them, and we were asked if we should not like to witness a representation, which we declined.

In the vicinity of Kairwān are numerous cemeteries; and thousands of marble tombs, covered with inscriptions in Arabic, are to be seen. This abundance of graves, which make a vast necropolis of the environs, is owing to the religious fervour of the wealthy Moslems, who often in their

dying moments express a wish to be buried in Kairwān, and as near as possible to the mosque or zaouia of Sidi Sahib.

We walked some way out of the town to visit a large Roman reservoir, 130 yards in diameter, and cisterns, much in the same style as those at Carthage, and were struck by the bare, desolate aspect of the country on all sides; but it seems that formerly it was thickly wooded, and it was only during a siege in the last century that the olive trees which formed a thick forest round Kairwān were cut down.

The Arab historian Novairi gives the following account of the foundation of this city:—"Okhbah, having resolved to found the city of Kairwān, led his soldiers to the site which he had chosen; it was a thicket in which no road had been traced, and when he desired the men to set to work, they said, 'How can you ask us to build a town on a place covered by a thick forest? We should surely fall a prey to the wild beasts of all kinds and serpents, by whom we should be attacked.' Okhbah then addressed a prayer to Allah, his warriors answering amen to his invocations, and then cried with a loud voice, 'Oh

serpents and wild beasts, know that we are the companions of the prophet of Allah. Quit the place which we have chosen as our habitation; those of you who disobey will be put to death.'

"When he had finished these adjurations, the Moslems saw, with surprise, the wild beasts and venomous reptiles retreat far away, taking with them their young ones. This miracle converted many Berbers to Islamism, and was followed by another, for the Arabs affirm that on the order of Sidi Okhbah the stones on the hills of Souathir detached themselves and presented themselves to build the Great Mosque!"

Our friends then took me to call on the ladies in the harem of Sidi Mourabet, the Tunisian Governor. The Mourabets are of ancient lineage and descendants of Sidi Abid-el-Khiryani, who lived many centuries ago, and belonged to the clan of the Almoravides. His shrine still exists, and is under the guardianship of the Mourabet family. We were most kindly received by the ladies and the son of the governor, whose wife was a Tunisian lady, and very handsome. The palace is beautiful, and the patio one of the finest I have yet seen.

We dined with the Espanetts, in the quaint old

house they inhabit, and passed a very pleasant evening with them. They told us they led a very agreeable life at Kairwān; that they received every Friday evening the officers and their wives, and with music and acting managed to amuse themselves; and that before the heat set in they had got up several picnics, and went to them on donkeys. I asked whether they had seen any scorpions, and Mademoiselle Marie told me she had found one on the wall of her bedroom, and her brother-in-law had killed a serpent five feet long, which was in the house; perhaps, as I suggested, it was once one of those petted and fed by some Moslem family. It seems that the Arabs sweep the scorpions off the outer walls of the houses by torchlight, as they formerly did at Tunis, for these vermin infest Kairwān.

M. Espanett said that the people in general were gentle and pleasant, and one thing reconciled them greatly to the French rule, namely, that formerly they were subject to invasions from the Zlass chieftains, a turbulent nomadic tribe, who came periodically and levied taxes on the peaceable inhabitants; and also that after the harvests the Bey did not fail to send his aides-de-camp and ministers to find out the richest proprietors and levy heavy contributions.

All this plundering has ceased, and they now only have to pay certain taxes, and are set free from the indirect contributions, which were far heavier.

I was sorry we had not seen the Mosque of Sidi Abádah, which seems to be a most curious edifice, and was built about forty years ago by a fanatic Marabout, who had persuaded the Bey Ahmed of his sanctity, and induced him to defray the expenses of the mosque. M. Espanett told us that close by it was a ditch with four immense anchors in it, the origin of which is unknown, but the dervish heard of these anchors being at Porto Farina, and begged the Bey to send them to him, though he made no use of them.

Mr. Broadley mentions that it was firmly believed, on the word of Sidi Abádah, that they were the identical ones which once attached the ark of Noah to Mount Ararat, and that their transport across the sandy plain between Susa and Kairwān occupied some 500 Arabs during five months. Also that, during the siege of Sebastopol in 1854 Abádah constructed two cannons with his own hands, and wrote to the Bey saying that the Prophet had appeared to him and had announced that on their arrival before the beleaguered town, the

latter would at once surrender. They were expeditiously forwarded to Tunis, and, at the Bey's pressing request, the Sultan sent a ship to convey them to Constantinople, and thence to the Turkish camp before Sebastopol. By an extraordinary coincidence, within a few hours of their being landed the town capitulated, and the fame of the last of the saints of Kairwān spread far and wide.

The ignorance and superstition of the Arabs are really surprising. Soon after our arrival at Tunis, during an eclipse of the moon, I recollect hearing shots fired, and on enquiring the cause, found that the Arabs were shooting at the moon to prevent the devil from devouring it! We were much amused by an Arab, who spoke a few words of French, at Kairwān. A negress passed by, so he pointed to her and said, "Kif-kif cirage" ("like blacking"). This word "kif-kif" is often used, and is quickly caught up by Europeans.

We took leave of our friends at nine o'clock and returned to our hotel, and soon started on our homeward journey. It was raining, and the darkness was appalling when I remembered the dangers of the road. Again we entreated our coachman to take lanterns, but in vain; and we had to resign

ourselves into his hands. I must say he acquitted himself wonderfully well, though he had to dismount several times to find the way, and we arrived quite safely at Susa at six o'clock. We remarked on our way a flock of sheep with immense tails, and this breed is peculiar to the north of Africa, the tails often weighing four or five pounds. There were also a few partridges, which did not seem much disturbed by our driving past.

The remaining few days at Susa were very uneventful. It certainly is the most important town on the south-eastern coast for exporting the productions of the country. The forests of olive trees are so dense that it is calculated there are more than ten millions of trees in the environs of the town itself, and now that European mills have been established, the quality of the oil is much better, and is sent in large quantities to Italy, whence it is exported as Italian oil. The duty on exports is so high that business is rendered very difficult, for 13 francs are charged on every 100 kilos. of oil; and on entering France there is a further duty of 6 francs on the same; while in Algeria there is no duty whatever, and until France annexes Tunis, and places the country on the same

footing as Algeria, all competition is out of the question, and few colonists will be found to settle in Tunisia.

On Saturday, the 13th, we were aroused at two o'clock in the morning by the booming of cannon, and later, on inquiry, we found it was to announce to the population that the fast of Ramadân had begun. A telegram had been received from Tunis to say that the new moon had just appeared. From this moment until the setting of the sun no one is supposed to eat or drink, and then another cannon is fired, and they may break their fast. This law is not so hard to the rich, who can turn day into night if they please ; but the poor, who are obliged to work all day, get terribly exhausted, and many excuse themselves from its observance. A gentleman at Susa, who was employing fifteen or sixteen Arab workmen, told me he was surprised to see one by one disappear, and at last he discovered that each had food concealed in his bernous, and they retired to eat in secret.

We left Susa on the evening of the 14th, and arrived at Tunis early on the 15th, having much enjoyed our little expedition.

And I must now take leave of my readers, for

I go in a few days to England, where I trust this very humble little work will be indulgently received; and, in conclusion, I must confess that I quite recognise the truth of the assertion, that having once drunk of the waters of Tunis, an irresistible power attracts me to this interesting country, and makes me hope to return, as it was prophesied to me when I first arrived here; and, perhaps, some of my friends may be tempted to follow our example when they realise that in thirty-seven hours, from leaving the centre of civilisation at Marseilles, they can be landed at Tunis, "le pays oublié," as a French writer calls it, and see costumes and witness scenes only to be found here, which must interest even the most prosaic of individuals. The air, too, is pure and light, and is considered excellent for invalids with chest complaints. I can only say in conclusion, that I shall be delighted to supply any information which may be required by those intending to spend a winter at Tunis, and Madame Barbe Patteson, Tunis, North Africa, will be a sufficient address.

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